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Major plans wide-ranging reforms for Scotland

Exclusive interview: PM says package to be introduced within weeks

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

Detailed government proposals for constitutional change in Scotland, which could give Scottish MPs new powers to debate and vote on their own affairs, will be disclosed by the Government before the end of the year.

In an exclusive interview with the *Independent*, John Major said he was hoping to announce the outcome of Ministerial discussions on a reform package "within a very few weeks".

The Prime Minister refused to give details of the surprise plan last night, but his disclosure will invite immediate speculation that the plans could give Scottish MPs alone the right to debate and vote on some measures specific to Scotland before they are approved by the Westminster Parliament.

The reform package is designed as an answer to the much more far-reaching Labour

tax-cut hopes raised by the Conservative Budget. Hopes of both generous Budget tax-cuts and a fall in interest rates by early next year were boosted yesterday by better-than-expected figures for inflation and government finances. The headline inflation rate fell to 3.2 per cent last month from 3.9 per cent in September, while the Government repaid £1.3bn debt in October. Shares reached a new peak and gilt rose, but the pound barely recovered from Wednesday's low. Page 22

and Liberal Democrat proposals for a tax-raising Scottish Parliament. Mr Major said the Government's own proposals would also have "ramifications in Wales".

The Prime Minister reiterated his passionate opposition to Labour's plan for a Scottish Parliament with a dramatic warning that it could provide a platform for the Scottish National Party to "turn Scotland into a separate nation."

And the Prime Minister, who robustly dismissed Labour charges that his government had "lurched to the right", went out of his way to quash speculation that he was on the brink of ruling out British membership of a single currency in the lifetime of the next Parliament. He made it clear that he was not prepared to give up its capacity to argue its case over how a



Changes ahead: John Major in Downing Street yesterday

Photograph: Edward Webb

single currency might affect countries outside monetary union as well as inside it. He said: "What people are asking me to do is to surrender British influence on an important policy. I am not going to go to surrender British influence on an important issue of policy."

Mr Major declared: "We are a full part of all the examination of what goes on and how it goes on. But we have uniquely a committee freedom to decide whether to join in or not. That means the British influence is at its maximum."

On constitutional reform the

Prime Minister said he had committed himself to a series of important but "gentle and evolutionary" constitutional reforms, including publication of full Cabinet Committee lists, reforms of Parliamentary procedures and opening the Security Service to scrutiny.

On Scotland, he declared that he had been struck at how little coverage in London the assembly proposals of the Scottish constitutional convention had received.

It was an "important event" even though he disagreed with the proposals.

Serb leaders are charged with genocide

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

The Bosnian Serb leaders, Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, were indicted yesterday on charges of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity for the massacre of up to 6,000 Bosnian Muslims near Srebrenica.

The United Nations war crimes tribunal in The Hague

described the killings as "one of the bloodiest acts of the war in former Yugoslavia, involving crimes of unprecedented cruelty against the Bosnian Muslim population".

The indictments, which could disrupt United States-sponsored peace talks being held in Dayton, Ohio, relate to the period last July when Bosnian Serb forces overran the United Nations-declared "safe area" of

Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia. Muslim men and boys of fighting age were separated from women and children, herded out of Srebrenica and executed in what appears to have been the single largest slaughter of unarmed people in Europe since the Second World War.

These crimes were committed by the Bosnian Serb forces under the control of

Radovan Karadzic and under the command of Ratko Mladic, who was seen on several occasions in or outside Srebrenica where systematic mass killings took place," said Christian Charron, a spokesman for the United Nations war crimes tribunal.

Evidence indicated that more than 100 Muslims had been slowly killed by Serb soldiers with knives, while the bodies of

several thousand others were buried in mass graves.

It was the second time in four months that the tribunal had charged Mr Karadzic and General Mladic with the war crimes.

The two Serb leaders were accused on 25 July of crimes against civilians throughout Bosnia, including the sniping campaign against residents of Sarajevo, and of taking United

Nations peace-keepers hostage and using them as human shields.

However, bringing Mr Karadzic and General Mladic to trial may not be easy for the UN tribunal.

They are believed to be somewhere in Bosnian Serb territory, but the two men have almost completely disappeared from public view since the Ohio talks opened two weeks ago.

IN BRIEF

Lloyd's man's millions

The 18-year-old ecstasy victim, Leah Betts died yesterday when her life support system was turned off. Page 3

University change
Students could apply to university immediately after they receive their A-level results under proposals for a new two-stage system. Page 2

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Hick gets ton
A century from Graeme Hick helped England to a score of 221 for four in the First Test against South Africa. Page 32

Today's weather
Sunny with a chilly northwesterly breeze and some wintry showers. Section Two, Page 33

11-year-olds shun homework for TV

BY JUDITH JUDD

Nearly half of all children leaving primary schools have never done any homework, according to a major new study to be published today. Instead, they spend their time watching television and playing computer games.

The study by the National Foundation for Educational Research into the homework habits of 2,300 11- and 12-year-olds found that 43 per cent of the former (final-year primary pupils) said they were never given homework and 64

per cent of the latter (first-year secondary pupils) were doing less than an hour and half.

Nearly 80 per cent of the primary children said they spent two or more hours a day watching television, but 11 per cent spent as much as six hours a day.

Computer games were a daily pursuit for 43 per cent and one in ten were "hooked" on four hours a day.

Just over 3 per cent of the primary pupils who filled in confidential questionnaires for the study admitted that they were given homework but did not do it.

The researchers also looked

at children's attitudes to school

and found that the vast majority - particularly girls - enjoyed it and liked their teachers, although nearly half said they had been bullied.

The 12-year-olds, interviewed at the end of their first year in secondary school, were only slightly less enthusiastic than the 11-year-olds.

Nearly a third of primary and 20 per cent of secondary pupils said they watched the clock because they were so eager for lessons to end.

Sue Harris, one of the report's

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REVIEWS

news

Universities devise new entry system

JUDITH JUDD

Education Editor

Students would be able to apply to university immediately after they receive their A-level results under proposals for a new two-stage system being drawn up by universities.

At present, those wanting to start university in the year they take A-levels have to apply during the previous December for entry in September, a few weeks after A-level results are published.

But Tony Higgins, chief executive of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) yesterday said a new procedure could be in place for those starting A-level courses the year after next and aiming at university entry in 1999.

University vice-chancellors will next month decide on proposals for a two-phase entry.

Mr Higgins told a seminar for careers teachers at Wolfson College, Oxford, that the first phase of students could apply during the first half of the

spring term, after they had sat their mock A-levels.

One of the reasons why the system needed reform, he said, was that 65 per cent of A-level grade predictions made by teachers were proved wrong.

Under the proposals, students who applied in the first phase would have four choices of university or college instead of the present six and would only be allowed to hold one conditional offer instead of two.

"Only 1 per cent of entrants come from their second choice.

It is just a waste of space," he said.

The second phase would start in May and continue until the end of September, so that students could wait until after they received their A-level results in August. They would then be allowed three choices, which would be sent in order to the three universities.

The present "clearing" system, in which students have to find out where places are available and join the scramble to secure them in late August and

September would therefore disappear.

If the vice-chancellors agree to the proposals, Mr Higgins and his officials will work out the detail and consult interested parties.

Schools are keen to change the system to reduce the uncertainty for applicants who have to gamble on getting the right grades. Universities have so far been cautious. They worry that there may not be enough time to process all the applications after A-level or to inter-

view candidates in those subjects where interviews are essential.

The new proposals are a compromise between the two points of view. Mr Higgins said that, initially, most students would probably apply during the first phase but he hoped that growing numbers would realise that applying after A-level made sense.

He told the seminar, organised by Cambridge Occupational Analysis, "The present system can lead to real unfairness. Admissions tutors start in-

terviewing in the autumn term. Some fill up on the 'first come first served' basis though, if we hear of it, we come down on them like a ton of bricks. Others reject some early candidates because they know some equally good ones will come along later."

A Government-commissioned report to be published next week will show that higher education applicants with advanced vocational qualifications (GNVQs) are generally well prepared for their courses.

IN BRIEF

School truancy leading to crime

More than 7 out of 10 children hunk off school and a quarter play truant at least one day a week, a Home Office-funded survey has found.

The study of 1,106 pupils found that a significant number of truants were involved in crime or were drawn into illegal activities such as under-age sex and drug-taking.

However, the report, *Truancy - The Partnership Approach*, said that when initiatives by the police, schools, local authorities, and retailers, were carried out crime fell, school attendance improved and town centres became safer.

IRA kidnap fear

Police in Northern Ireland were last night searching for a man believed to have been snatched by an IRA punishment squad. John Hegarty, 19, had earlier been questioned by police about the theft of £16,000 worth of Christmas savings from a church community centre in Strabane, Co Tyrone.

Sea birds killed

Marine pollution experts are investigating an oil slick which has killed sea birds in Dyfed, west Wales. The oil is affecting about eight miles of coast between Cefn Sidan beach and the Pembrey country park. The bodies of about 45 cormorants and guillemots have been found.

Pilots disciplined

Two Britannia Airways pilots who flew an empty Boeing 767 away from the normal flight path in order to pass over the home of the first officer to greet his wife have been disciplined by the airline. Capt Hugh Carmichael has resigned from the airline and former first officer Michael Stanley has lost seniority and faced "severe disciplinary sanctions" over the incident which occurred at Congleton, Cheshire, on 30 October.

Murder inquiry

Police in Warwickshire were last night questioning four people in connection with the murder of 15-year-old Naomi Smith in Ansley Common, near Nuneaton. Naomi was stabbed and sexually assaulted at a recreation ground near her home on 14 September.

Cleaner beaches

Britain's bathing beaches were their cleanest ever this year, with 89 per cent meeting the European Union's legal standard for sewage pollution, compared to 82 per cent last year. By law they should all comply next year - but it is highly unlikely that they will.

Bouncing with health

Young women should jump on the spot 50 times a day to prevent the onset of brittle bone disease in later life, according to a report by Dr Joan Bassey, of the Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham, published in the *Annals of Rheumatic Diseases*.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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who was in his early fifties had spent 29 years in the NHS and was paid £68,000 at the time of his departure. The cash was paid in accordance with NHS regulations and approved by NHS auditors, he said.

Alan Milburn, a Labour spokesman, said paying out 1 per cent of the trust's annual income on a single severance package was "astonishing and unacceptable".

The pay-out comes amid continued criticism of a "fire and fire" mentality in the health service which has led to a growing NHS redundancy bill in recent years.

Andrew Wall, former chief executive of Bath Health Authority who was himself made redundant at the age of 56 in 1992, said yesterday that the present NHS arrangements were "chaotic" with "chief executives and others still losing their jobs at the whim of chairs of health authorities and trusts".

Ford walk-out as pay offer is turned down

BARRE CLEMENT

Labour Editor

More than 1,000 Ford workers yesterday staged unofficial stoppages in protest at an inflation-busting "final" pay offer worth a minimum of 9.25 per cent over two years.

The walk-outs came as the Government announced that the inflation rate had dropped from 3.9 per cent to 3.2 per cent, as compared with a proposed increase at Ford this year of 4.75 per cent.

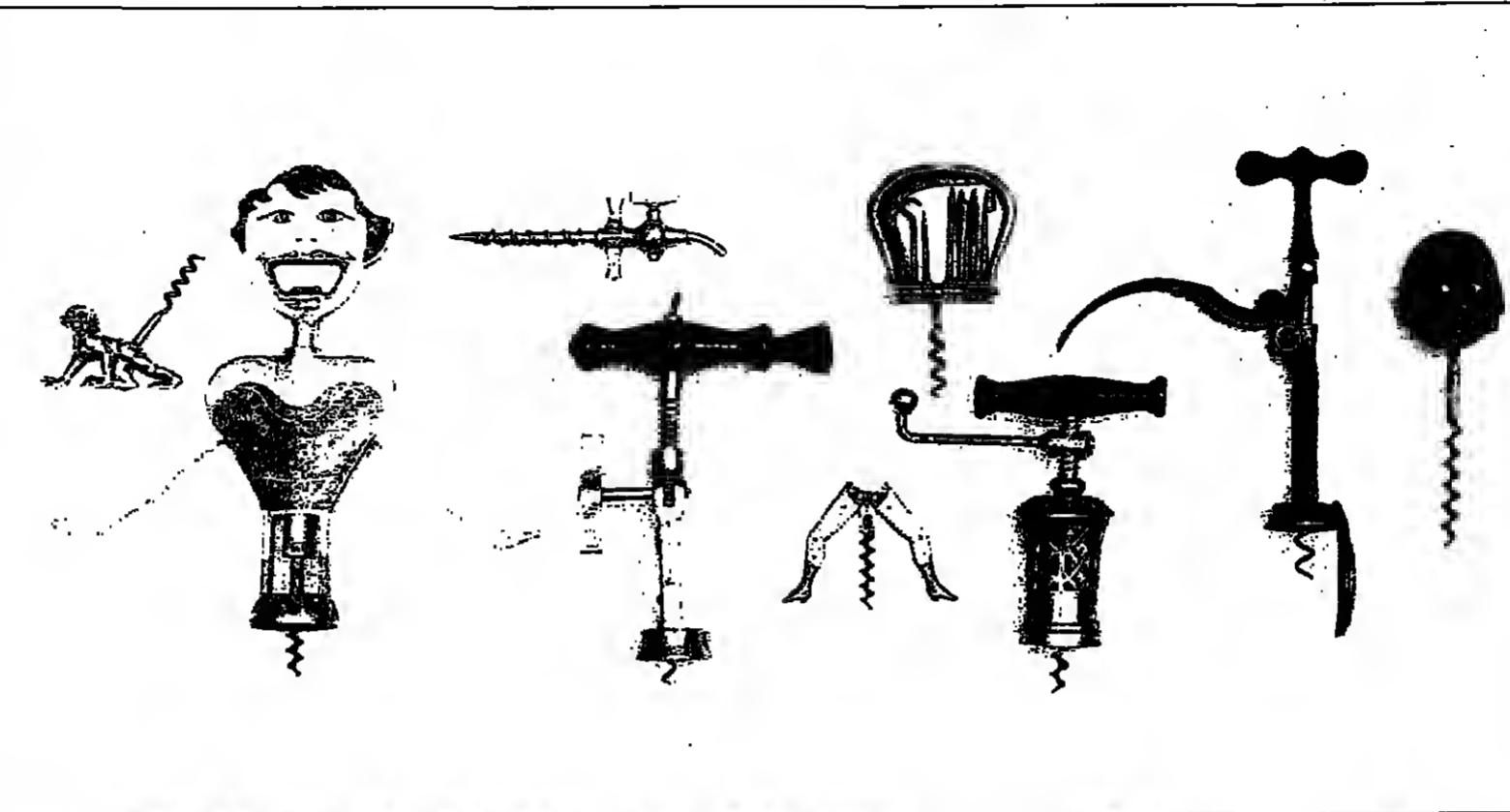
Union leaders, who will be expected to repudiate the wildcat action or face stiff legal penalties, professed surprise at the militancy of their members at the Dagenham assembly plant and the normally moderate employees at Southampton.

Senior officials at the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union predicted that while the two plants would revert to normal working today, other divisions of Ford UK, including the parts delivery service based at Dagenham, might decide to emulate yesterday's "spontaneous action".

Union leaders at the Bridgend and Halewood complexes were minded to accept the company's proposals during 12 hours of negotiations on Wednesday, but they were outvoted two to one by representatives from other Ford works.

Plant representatives are to meet next Wednesday to consider the results of a consultation process and are expected to call for fresh negotiations with management. Some union insiders believe the company will not improve its offer unless there is a substantial majority for industrial action in a ballot.

The proposals would give the 22,000 hourly-paid Ford workers a 4.5 per cent rise next year, or the inflation rate, plus 0.5 per cent, whichever is higher.



A lot of bottle: Part of a collection of antique corkscrews to be auctioned at Christie's in London on 22 November

Photograph: John Voos

Siamese twin boy dies during separation

One of the Siamese twin boys born in London five days ago has died during an eight-hour operation to separate them and the other is fighting for his life, it was disclosed yesterday, writes Glenda Cooper.

No Siamese twin born with a fused heart has ever survived, but surgeons said yesterday there was a good chance of the surviving twin, who is now in intensive care, making a recovery.

The "incredibly complicated" surgery took place at Great Ormond Street Hospital in central London. The twins, from Kuwait and born five weeks premature, had been joined from the breastbone to the navel and had fused hearts and livers.

The consultant paediatric surgeon Mr Edward Kiely, who led the operating team, said: "It was the first time the team, the most expert in the field in Europe, had attempted to separate conjoined twins with fused hearts. Before the operation the surgeons gave the parents a 1%

per cent chance of one of the twins surviving.

The major problem facing them was that only one heart was functioning properly, Mr de Leval said: "We realised that the good heart was supporting the bad heart. When we disconnected the two, the bad heart could not support the circulation of the twin who died."

He said that after the surgeons thought they had separated the hearts, they realised there was a second, hidden connection between them. It took 10 minutes to find the join.

The surgeons said the next few days would be critical. But Professor Spitz said: "The child has got a normal heart, which is a big advantage. We would be very disappointed if he did not survive."

Queen Mother's hip replacement was 'a success'

GLENDA COOPER

The Queen Mother underwent a hip replacement operation yesterday but is making "a good recovery", Buckingham Palace said last night.

The one-and-a-half-hour operation on her right hip, at King Edward VII's Hospital for Officers in London, was "completed successfully". The operation on the Queen Mother, 95, was planned, on the advice of her doctors, and was not emergency surgery. She is expected to remain in hospital for about two weeks.

The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council said the Queen Mother was one of the oldest people in the world to undergo hip replacement but the prospects for a new pain-free life after her operation were "extremely good". A spokesman said: "The man-made replacement, of plastic and metal, removes all pain and usually results in improved mobility. There is a 95 per cent success rate for such operations."

The Queen Mother's pain and discomfort has been noticeable recently and she has relied on a walking stick or wheelchair for some time. Most recently she has been driven around on public engagements in a golf buggy.

At her last public appearance - the Field of Remembrance Service at Westminster Abbey a week ago - the Queen Mother walked with difficulty using two sticks, and she was not present at the Cenotaph on Sunday for the Remembrance Day Service.

Although hip replacement is a standard procedure carried out routinely on 50,000 patients each year, the effect of surgery on a 95-year-old is bound to cause concern.

In almost every case the patient is elderly and usually suffering from painful arthritis. Most patients stay two or three weeks in hospital, but it can take three months before they can walk unassisted and six months to a year before they make a full recovery.

The Queen Mother's operation is likely to fuel the debate over claims of rationing within the health service. While privately funded operations, like hers, are successfully carried out on the very old, they are seldom performed on NHS patients over the age of 75.



In pain: The Queen Mother has had difficulty walking

11-year-olds choose TV over homework

From page 1
authors, said: "There is no government guidance on the amount of homework children should do. It is left to individual schools and local authorities to decide. As a result, the amount varies from schools to school and may even vary be-

tween children in the same school."

She said that many primary-school pupils were not being prepared for what they would encounter in secondary schools.

"There is still a concern that pupils are not overburdened. Teachers tend to encourage

pupils to carry on work they have been doing at school or to continue personal reading."

The findings of the study will boost plans by Labour for national homework targets. David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, recently angered teacher unions by saying

that even seven-year-olds should be doing at least half an hour a night and secondary pupils an hour and a half.

The report also supports Mr Blunkett's contention that pupils are watching television instead of doing homework.

While secondary-school children came closer to reaching Mr Blunkett's homework target with 19 per cent doing one and a half hours a night and 13 per cent doing more, they watched even more television.

A third admitted to four hours or more a day and two-thirds to between one and three hours.

GRRREAT EXPECTATIONS

W. & J.
GRAHAM'S
PORT

Just roll it round your tongue.

W. & J.
GRAHAM'S
PORT

NICHOLAS TIMMINS

Public Policy Editor

An NHS Trust has spent £524,000 making its chief executive redundant. The cash is sufficient to provide 150 hip replacements, mend 600 hernias or treat seven times over Jayne Bowen, the child with leukaemia who was refused treatment by Cambridgeshire Health Authority.

The pay-off dwarfs the £200,000 payment made by Greenwich Healthcare NHS Trust when it parted with its chief executive and the £250,000 compensation payment made last year by the Burnley Trust to Maggie Aikman after the relationship between her and the consultants at the NHS hospital broke down.

The figure was revealed yesterday by the Healthcare Financial Management Association, the association of NHS finance officers, as part of its an-

nual statistics on chief executives' pay.

These show that 20 trust directors - half of them chief executives - earned more than £100,000 last year, compared with £6 in 1993-94.

Cheviot and Wanstead NHS

Trust, which runs Wanstead Hospital in Ashington, Northumberland, said John O'Brien, its chief executive until March this year, had taken early retirement "in the interests of the service". He had been appointed as chief executive of the trust only in April 1994.

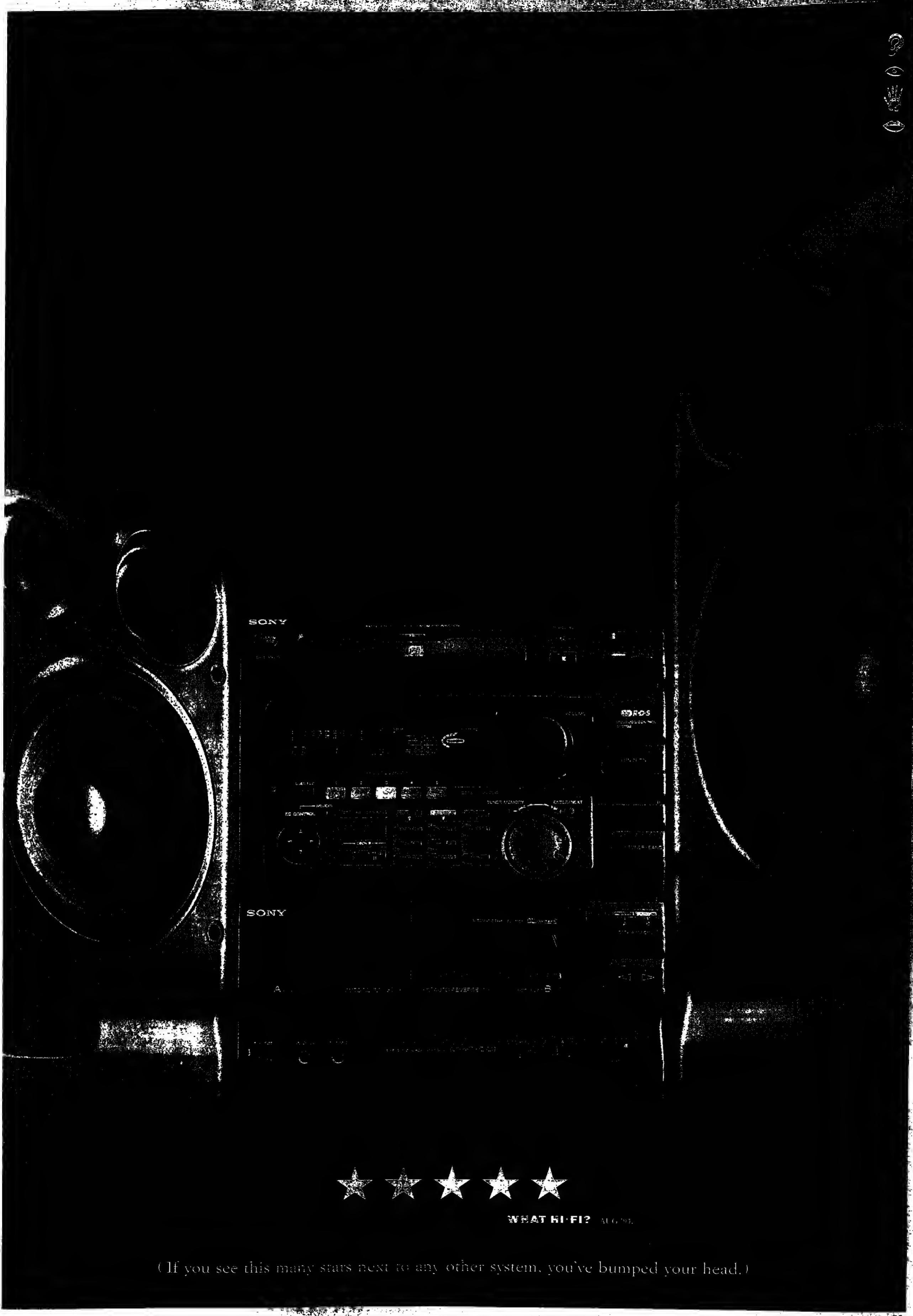
Jonathan Tymms, acting finance director for the trust, whose total income last year was £46m, said the half-million bill was made up of a £41,000 compensation payment for loss of office, an element for salary, and £414,000 in pension contributions, which must be capitalised under new NHS rules.

He added that Mr O'Brien,

Boys in hospital after drugs cocktail

Boys in hospital after drugs cocktail

Boys in hospital after drugs cocktail



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End of the line for 'Today': The newspaper that broke the mould is the victim of falling sales and a harsh economic climate

Colourful days and the death of Eddy's dream

STEVE BOGGAN

As the world's first seven-day electronic newspaper was being put to bed on 3 March 1986, its editor, Brian MacArthur, gathered his exhausted staff together and thanked them.

"Tonight, we've reached the green fields despite the scoffers, the cynics and fair weather friends. It's a magnificent achievement by all of you," he said. It was indeed an achievement that *Today* came out at all that night. Computer failures dogged production; the new technology that was to have made the newspaper more up-to-the-minute than any other in history was not working; and, of course, the colour printing disaster that was to have become the hallmark of *Today* was only then being conceived.

Recalling the launch later, Mr MacArthur wrote: "As they left the party celebrating the launch,

most staff knew in their hearts that the paper was disappointing... The greatest betrayal was the quality of the colour, the great promise of *Today*. We had a genuinely historic picture of the Queen. It had been transmitted in seconds down a telephone line... scanner machine, the first time that computer technology had been used to transmit new pictures from Australia, where the Queen was on tour, to Britain. As it appeared on the front page, however, the colour was smudged."

It was to have been a technological dream, but it turned into a nightmare for Mr MacArthur and Eddy Shah, the Warrington newspaper proprietor who broke the union stranglehold over print production and launched the first new national newspaper in decades.

Production free from the interference of unions and press

barons and direct inputting by journalists was to have been the future. On the back of the dream came other newspapers. Some, like the *Independent*, survived. Others, like the *London Daily News* and the *Sunday Correspondent*, failed.

"There was a tremendous sense of optimism before the launch," Michael Williams, a former *Today* features editor, recalled. "It was to have been a truly independent, classless newspaper using the latest in technology to produce a clean, colour newspaper with a USA *Today* style of presentation. But we weren't ready. Shah set a premature deadline... the staff couldn't cope with the technology. It was chaos and pandemonium come launch time."

On day one, Mr MacArthur said the paper sold more than 1 million copies and could have sold 3 million. But, with daily sales down to 550,000 within months, 400,000 lower than projected, *Today* ran into severe financial trouble and was sold in a £24m deal to Tiny Rowland's Lonrho in June 1986.

In June 1987, with circulation at just 300,000, Rupert Murdoch bought the paper in a £40m deal and installed as editor David Montgomery, editor of the *News of the World*. He transformed the paper into a brash, sharp read for the aspiring executive. He was the first to identify the yuppie as a sexy tabloid subject, filling the paper with pound signs, power dressing, mobile phones and property prices. Paradoxically, he was also the first to notice the new wave of green consumerism. He married the two, doubled circulation within a year and earned a Newspaper of the Year title.

For a time, *Today* was seen as a threat to both the *Daily Mail* and the *Mirror*, but that threat subsided with yuppie-dom and the fortunes of the Greens. With sales falling below half a million again, 45 journalists were made

redundant in January 1991. Mr Montgomery stood down several months later, making way for Martin Dunn, deputy editor of the *Sun* to tidy up a product left shoddy after its move to Wapping. Mr Dunn's peers believe he performed well, redesigning the paper and stemming the circulation drift, before moving handing over to

Richard Stott, who remained editor until yesterday.

Under the stewardship of Mr Stott — a former *Mirror* and *People* editor — the paper leaned harder to the left and *Today* began to nip at the heels of government and the Establishment.

But circulation wasn't holding steady. It was down to 660,000 from 615,000 last year, and it was the paper's downfall. Despite its fresh lease of life as a campaigning paper, despite comparatively low overheads — offices in Wapping and shared News International premises — the newspaper group was no longer prepared to absorb the losses.

Last night, as its journalists pondered their future, *Today* was put to bed for the last time.

At the same time, the price war was all but abandoned last night. Next Monday, the *Times* will be on sale for 30p, up 5p. Two months ago, the cover price was raised from 20p to 25p, allowing both the *Telegraph* and the *Independent* to follow suit, to 35p from 30p.

The *Telegraph*, which yesterday unveiled sharply lower profits for the year to date, said it was likely to raise its cover price as well, probably to 40p.

Analysis

News International is also lowering the profit margin it provides to retailers from 11.9 per cent to just 10 per cent. Taken together, the moves look aimed at improving the profitability of the *Times*.

"This means that even Murdoch isn't impervious to newsprint increases," Daniel Coulson, chief executive of the Telegraph group, said. "And it means the price war didn't work."

The *Times* has seen its circulation nearly double to 680,000 from about 350,000 as a result of its aggressive pricing strategy. But following an initial slump, the *Telegraph* managed to keep its sales above the psychologically important 1 million mark.

Moreover, the rise in circulation hurt profits at News International at the very time that Mr Murdoch's cash needs elsewhere in the world, particularly in Asia, were growing.

Profits from his master company were hurt by development costs at Star-TV, the Asian satellite broadcasting company.

The UK newspaper industry anticipates much more action in coming months. In particular, speculation over the future of the ailing Express titles intensified yesterday. Media analysts expect Lord Stevens, chairman of United News and Media, either to sell the newspapers or to invest fresh funds to improve their chances of competing against the rival Mail titles. The end of the price war will make it easier for him to find funds for the needed investment.

Insiders at NJ said the closure would also allow additional copies of the *Sun* to be printed, and that the company was planning to concentrate on building up its other titles, including the *Times*, the *Sunday Times* and the *News of the World*.

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Mathew Horsman

End of price war gives industry hope



First edition: Eddy Shah, Today's founder, with a copy on launch day. Photograph: Reuter



Murdoch: Would not absorb losses. Photograph: David Rose

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news

Free and easy: While some national monuments now charge for entry, there is still a bustling alternative culture for the day-tripper



Star turn: Visitors watch a free performance by a street entertainer in Covent Garden, central London, yesterday

Photograph: John Voos

V&A director attacks 'silly' donations

DAVID LISTER

The director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Dr Alan Borg, yesterday described the museum's system of asking visitors for voluntary donations as "silly".

claiming it just made people feel uncomfortable and did not raise revenue.

As revealed in the *Independent* yesterday, Dr Borg wants to end this system, and is an advocate of compulsory charges. At a meeting with journalists he spelled out the enormous sums the museum now needs, claiming that most of its 144 galleries were sub-standard.

Dr Borg took over as director of the V&A from Dame Elizabeth Estee-Coll last month. He has already made changes to the management system she introduced. "I have removed one layer of management," he said. "One effect of that has been to bring the curators closer to the centre."

He added that millions needed to be spent on hiring the museum up to a proper standard. "We have got galleries which to my mind are a disgrace to a national museum," he said.

"The British art and design galleries are poor. We haven't



Dr Alan Borg: made changes

got an education centre, which is amazing for a place that was set up with a remit of education. Some galleries are appallingly displayed, one has been closed for living memory. The Islamic gallery is appalling. The Henry Cole wing galleries are a disgrace. The majority of galleries need upgrading, from very serious upgrading to making sure everything has a label. The ceramics galleries are very poorly displayed with labels that go back to before the war."

On the question of charging, Dr Borg, who introduced admission charges at the Imperial War Museum, said he did not have a specific figure in mind, but added: "It is not a question of affordability." Referring to gallery closures, he said: "I would rather have an entrance charge which could keep the galleries open." He added that the museum, which receives a £30m grant from government, was moving towards a deficit.

In an article to be published in *Antique Collector*, Dr Borg says that the majority of people who visit the V&A "could afford to pay a £10 entrance fee if they had to". At present visitors are asked to give a £4.50 donation.

It will be up to the trustees, headed by Lord Armstrong of Ilminster, the former Cabinet Secretary, to decide whether to bring in compulsory admission charges. Dr Borg said the voluntary system was silly and made people feel uncomfortable and he would prefer to remove the voluntary charges.

Meanwhile, the V&A is planning to renew its premises by launching an architectural competition for a £40m building on part of its site. It will apply for up to £20m of millennium funding for the project.

BBC gets \$1m for Diana interview

CLARE GARNER

The BBC has been besieged by bids for the rights to broadcast the Panorama interview with the Princess of Wales and yesterday raked a reported \$1m from a single deal with ABC, one of America's major networks. Billed as an ABC News Special, the interview will be broadcast on Friday 24 November at 9pm.

ABC, which struck a news-gathering partnership with the BBC in July 1993, outbid its three main rivals for what is being dubbed the scoop of the century. The BBC insisted that ABC paid a "fair market rate" but refused to be specific about the price paid.

As Britons sit down to watch the interview on Monday evening, the programme will simultaneously be broadcast by BBC World and BBC Prime, which together reach 46 million homes worldwide.

At a press conference yesterday, Panorama reporter Martin Bashir said the Princess

of Wales was given no preferential treatment and insisted that there had been "no paid intermediary... no Mr Big or Mr Fix It" to secure the interview. "I was able to outline the general areas of discussion but no specific questions were given to anyone beforehand," he said.

Mr Bashir insisted that the interview had emerged from more general research into the monarchy and said the BBC had approached the Princess rather than the other way round.

"The invitation came from us. It was not suggested to us by anyone else," he said. "You know and I know that you use first hand sources if you can," he added.

Mr Bashir, who in the past has presented *Songs of Praise*, said that because he had never done a royal story before, he had been unaware of the enormity of the scoop.

Mr Bashir was unable to predict what effect the interview would have on the monarchy saying he was "a professional doing his job".

Something for nothing? All you need is a spot of lateral thinking

DAVID LISTER
Arts Correspondent

Like most of London's museums now, the Science Museum in South Kensington charges for admission. But for those eager to broaden the frontiers of their knowledge, they can boldly go where few men have gone before - to Willesden Green - and have an alternative science lecture for free.

Every week expert "alternative thinkers" give free talks. Last night's advocated the theory that diseases arrive on our planet on comets that have travelled from outer space.

While increasing parts of the capital's high culture move to charging customers, with the new head of the Victoria and Albert an advocate of admission charges, there remains a bustling alternative culture for the visitor or family on a day out. And it's free. So too are the national monuments to high culture: the British Museum, the National and Tate galleries. Up to 50 lesser museums and galleries in London are still free. But with the Science, Natur-

al History, National Maritime and Imperial War museums all having compulsory charges, and the V&A asking euphemistically for voluntary donations, it can pay to think laterally. And some of London's free attractions certainly demand a certain amount of lateral thinking.

They still change the guard at Buckingham Palace. And you still do not need a penny to see it, though you need a pocket calculator to plan your visit. It is advertised as being "on alternate days, on even dates in November and December, not in very wet weather or on certain ceremonial days".

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Free day in London

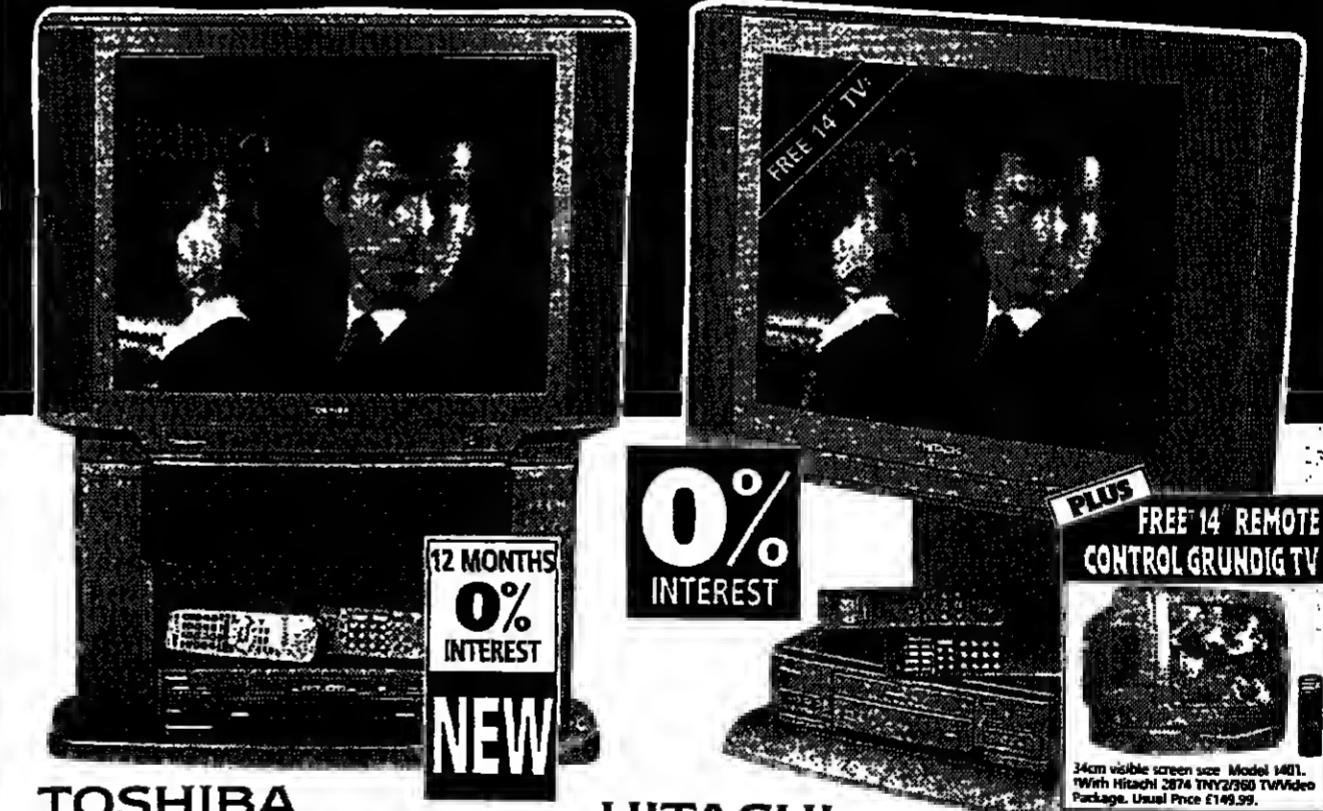
- 10am: British Museum
- 11.30am: Watch the Changing Of The Guard, St James's Park
- 1pm: National Gallery
- 4pm: Visit the 10 Bears, Christmas Grotto at Harrods (Beware: the toilets cost £1)
- 5pm: Join in with Carols in Trafalgar Square

It is proud of what it calls free eccentric entertainment, such as Speakers' Corner and the Peter Pan Cup Swimming Race. There is non-eccentric entertainment in places like the South Bank Centre foyer, Westminster Abbey and Covent Garden piazza. The Oxford and Cambridge boat race can be viewed for free, so can the London marathon and the Notting Hill Carnival.

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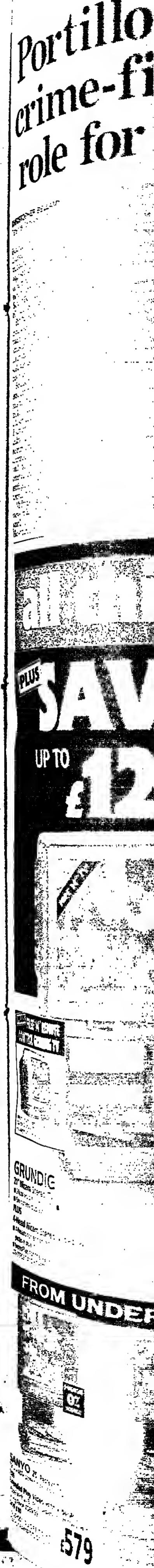
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politics

Portillo backs crime-fighting role for forces

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

Defence resources may be diverted to help fight drug trafficking and international organised crime as they become more of a threat to national security, the Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Portillo, said yesterday.

But he added that such a move would not prejudice the traditional roles of the armed forces and that they needed to retain the ability to fight full-scale wars as well as taking on new roles.

Because future conflict could arise anywhere and for many reasons, intelligence would be the key to defence in future, he told service chiefs and top civil servants. Although weapons technology will continue to be transferred to Third World countries, Mr Portillo said it was vital that Western countries retained their superiority in intelligence, using modern information systems.

Mr Portillo was giving his own views on British security in the year 2010 to an expert audience. He softened the view on Euro-

pean defence co-operation which he had expressed at the Conservative Party conference, but stressed that individual nations, and NATO, remained the "most credible" defensive organisations. Sources at the MoD stressed the speech was his own work and not been written for him.

Mr Portillo said the growth of crime and "inner-city alienation" might diminish the self-confidence of democracies and make them more introspective. "At the same time," he said, "drug trafficking and international organised crime will be seen as a greater threat to national security even than they are today. Defence resources may be diverted to combatting them."

MoD sources said that the defence resources to be diverted would be mainly intelligence and communications, although Navy and Air Force units could be involved in the interception of smugglers – a role for which they have always been available.

The move would be consistent with recent proposals to involve the security service (M15) more in tackling organised

crime. The need to use defence forces might arise as international drug cartels became better organised and more heavily armed, MoD sources said.

Mr Portillo stressed the need to develop automated battlefield command and control systems, which would be "the key to success, and the key to minimising casualties". The need to minimise friendly casualties was particularly acute as people would become less tolerant of mistakes, he said. He added that Britain would therefore need to continue to work closely with its own work and not been written for him.

Mr Portillo said the growth of crime and "inner-city alienation" might diminish the self-confidence of democracies and make them more introspective. "At the same time," he said, "drug trafficking and international organised crime will be seen as a greater threat to national security even than they are today. Defence resources may be diverted to combatting them."

Mr Portillo said the age of deterrence had not ended but that deterring people had become much more complicated in a more "diverse" world. "The nation state remains the most credible unit of deterrence," he said, citing the examples of Britain in the Falklands war and of Israel. He added that "deterrence" might also be used to counter state-sponsored terrorism – in other words, a terrorist attack on London might be answered by a massive strike on a foreign target known to be responsible.

The act of defiance came as



Security risk: MPs are pressing for a 'safe' area for media interviews after the College Green attack on Brian Mawhinney. Photograph: Tom Pilston

Students declare war over Asylum Bill

PATRICIA WYNNE DAVIES
Political Correspondent

Supporters of Wednesday's paint and flour attack on Tory party chairman, Brian Mawhinney, yesterday convened a follow-up press conference in their London college, declaring "war" on the Government over the proposed Asylum and Immigration Bill.

The act of defiance came as

pressure increased from Tory MPs for a dedicated "safe area" close to the Palace of Westminster in which broadcast interviews could be conducted with ministers and MPs.

The police were forced to apologise for taking 20 minutes to respond to frantic 999 calls from Alan Duncan MP, the chairman's parliamentary aide, after Dr Mawhinney was accosted on College Green on his way to interviews after the State Opening of Parliament.

The Commons Sergeant-at-Arms is expected to hold an inquiry into the possibilities of a dedicated press area.

Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, was said yesterday to have been concerned about possible risks to safety since the leadership contest in the summer, when the green was in constant use for media interviews.

Authorities at Kingsway College, Holborn, moved quickly to distance themselves from the holding of the news conference on its premises, saying it was convened in the canteen by Nick de Marco, student union president at Kingsway and an organiser of the Movement for Justice, which was behind the paint-throwing.

Two A-level students at the college, Karen Doyle and Helen Malick, both 18, were arrested for assault on Wednesday, along with Amanda Egbe, 20, a sabbatical officer on the student union of the University of North London. Charges had not been brought last night.

Mr de Marco said the protest "was a declaration of war against the Government. If it tries to introduce the most racist Bill ever and send people back to their deaths, we will stop it in any way necessary."

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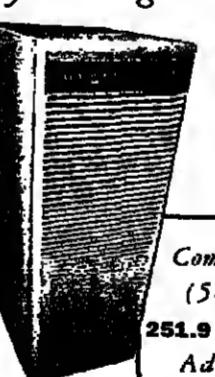
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Bonn opposition picks leader fit to tackle Kohl

IMRE KARACS
Mannheim

Amid scenes of jubilation befitting a great election victory, Germany's main opposition party, the Social Democrats, yesterday dumped the unpopular Rudolf Scharping, and acclaimed the colourful Oskar Lafontaine as their new leader.

The stunning coup, hatched overnight by Mr Lafontaine after a rousing speech at the SPD's conference in Mannheim, sent shivers down the spines of conservative politicians in Bonn. Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats, 14 points ahead in the latest polls, now face an energised opposition no longer dragged down by a leader devoid of ideas and charisma.

Until yesterday morning, Mr Scharping stood unchallenged for the post of chairman. Then, as fate would have it, he was who had to convey the news of his imminent demise: "I asked Oskar if he was going to be a candidate," Mr Scharping told the hushed audience. "Oskar answered my question by saying he would run."

The announcement brought the roof down, rewarding Mr Scharping with the first real table-thumping ovation at a conference already into its third day. The party really took off an hour later, when the result of the ballot was read out. Mr Scharping, his pallid features turning ever paler, seemed to be choking back tears as his popularity within the party he has

led for two years was enumerated. Mr Lafontaine, who led the party's unsuccessful electoral challenge to Mr Kohl in 1990, had received 321 votes; Mr Scharping, defeated by Mr Kohl last year, a derisory 190.

"I was of the view that we needed clarity," Mr Scharping mumbled. "Now we have it."

The new leader faces the task

of uniting Social Democrats behind policies that can challenge the conservative hegemony. After a series of regional-election setbacks, the party has plunged to its lowest poll rating since the war. Although Mr Lafontaine has only won a two-year term, his role in preparing the Social Democrats for the 1998 general elections will be crucial. "I am aware of my responsibilities and depend on all of you to support me," he said in his victory speech.

If charismas were all they needed, the Social Democrats would be home and dry. Mr Lafontaine, the 52-year-old prime minister of Saarland, has bags of wit and charm, and a populist touch that few can match. He also has quite a reputation as a bona vivre.

In 1992 Saarland's parliament discovered that he was paying himself a state pension, at the age of 48, on top of his salary as prime minister. Mr Lafontaine was forced to spin a convoluted fable about cash flows and his high cost of living in order to escape censure.

His tastes might be expensive, but his origins and politics are humble. The son of working-

class parents, the new SPD leader is on the left of the party, embodying the blue-collar values that are finding ever fainter echoes in the 1990s. As German industry migrates to rural regions in the south or exports jobs to cheaper countries in Europe, the ranks of the class-conscious working class are dwindling. Even in his native Saarland, Mr Lafontaine's most recent achievement — the profitable conversion of a derelict foundry into a theme park —

isn't quite what it seems.

But economic reality has tempered Mr Lafontaine's socialist zeal, and he has proved adept at toning down some of the rhetoric. In foreign affairs, he remains firmly on the left, however. His passionate argument against the use of German warplanes in the Bosnian peace-keeping mission earned him loud applause on Wednesday.

Mr Lafontaine's misgivings about European monetary union were not so well received. As the Christian Democrats have warned, the new leader "will whip up passions" about the common currency, even in the teeth of Hitler protests from the party's Euro-wing.

Whether he resorts to the

populist tricks Mr Kohl fears re-

mains to be seen. The SPD leader might have learned the lessons of the 1990 general elections, when his chauvinistic campaign against German reunification was swept aside by the voters. Mr Lafontaine, then the SPD's candidate against Mr Kohl, added up the sums and proclaimed that East Germany would cost a lot more to West German tax-payers than the conservatives were admitting. Ultimately, he was proved right, but that was long after Mr Kohl romped home in triumph.

The memories of that fatal misjudgement of the nation's mood are still vivid. After 13 years in the wilderness, the Social Democrats would be loath to suffer another defeat in three years' time and are therefore keeping their options open. Mr Kohl's next challenger open.

That task may yet fall to Gerhard Schröder, the strutting prime minister of Lower Saxony, who does not disguise his burning ambition to take on Mr Kohl. Whether he gets the chance or not, from now on the going will get a lot tougher for the Chancellor, and life in the SPD will be a lot more interesting.

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PEOPLE



Pele: Rare opinion-maker

several years ago why Israel had no female air force pilots, he acknowledged, but has no regrets about his criticism of Israeli government policies. Described as moving "from figurehead to hammer head", the 71-year-old President has been getting into a few scrapes lately. His latest was with Alice Miller, a soldier who won a legal battle to become a military test pilot.

Mr Weizman, himself a former fighter pilot, says he didn't mean to offend her when he called her "Maedele" — "Misy" in Yiddish — and wondered if she had ever seen a man darning socks. Asked on television if he was a chauvinist, he replied: "Perhaps, perhaps," adding, "I think there is some criticism I need to take to heart, and I will take it to heart."

The pilot issue has long been a Weizman bête noire. Asked

must put our people in Congress, people who will defend our race and resolve our problems," he said.

"On the other hand," Pele added, "the lack of black congressmen has a good side, in that today politicians have a bad reputation of being corrupt. At least blacks don't carry that burden."

The kidnapping of Rigoberto Menchu's cousin's baby has been solved. Guatemalan police have arrested the child's mother, Cristina Menchu Zapata, and husband, Miguel Velasquez Lobos, for abducting their own son on 4 November in an extortion attempt.

Police say the couple had asked Ms Menchu, the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner and human-rights campaigner, for a loan but she had refused them.

Pele is a rarity among black Brazilians: an opinion-maker. Now the sports minister and retired football star wants to spur others to do something about a country in which blacks are prominent in sport and entertainment, but not in government and the military. To improve their lives, he told the newspaper *Jornal do Brasil*, black Brazilians must alter the racial make-up of Congress.

If the black man wants to improve his social level, he

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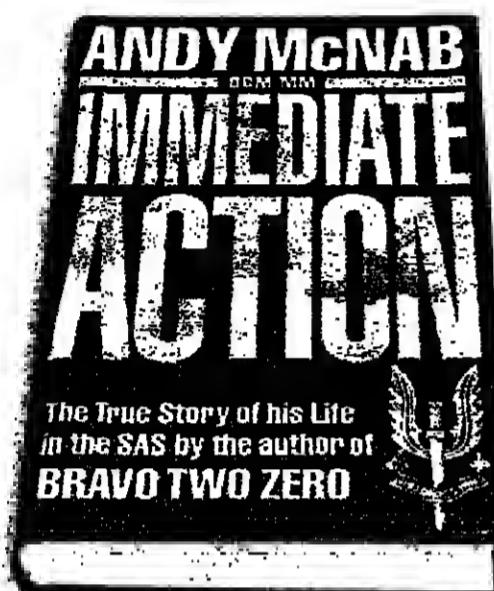
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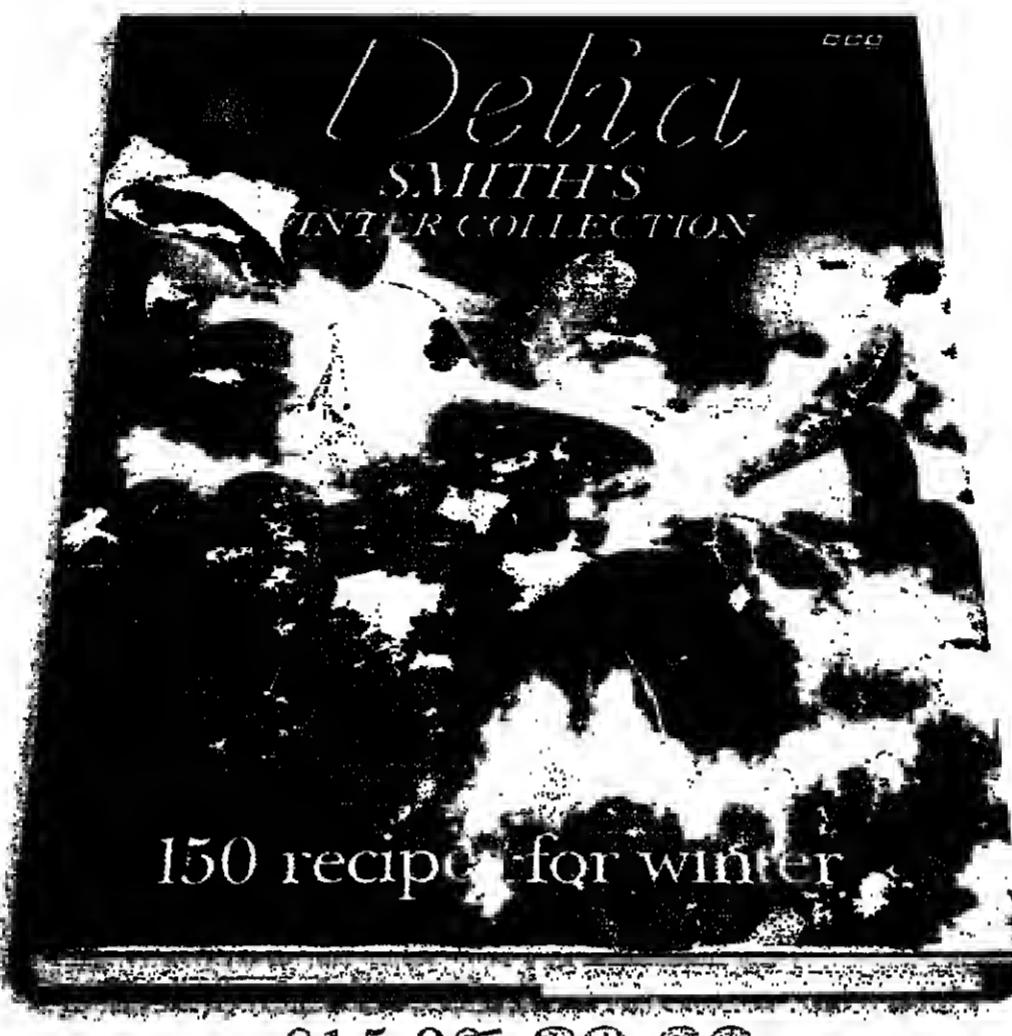
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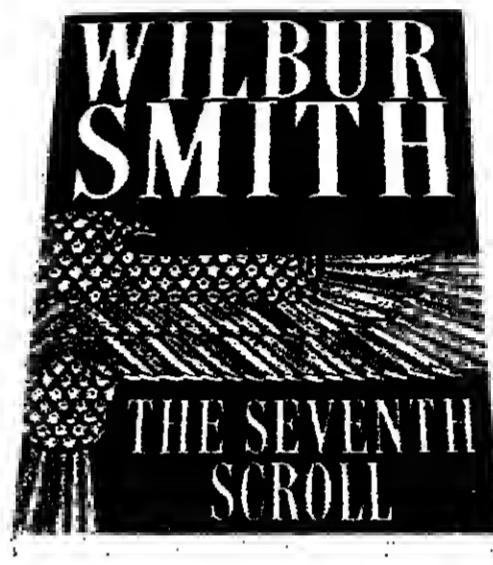
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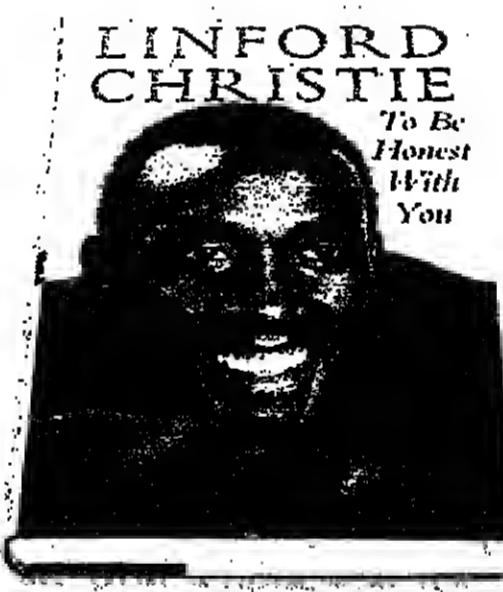
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Whatever you think of the Nigerian situation today, we know you wouldn't want us to hurt the Nigerian people. Or jeopardise their future.

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WHILE YOU'RE TRYING TO SAVE THE BRAZILIAN RAINFOREST THE BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE IS DISAPPEARING.

Every year, charities in Britain spend millions of pounds to halt the destruction of the Brazilian rainforest. An important task yet, on the other hand, we seem oblivious to the effect modern development continues to have on our own countryside. According to the Council for the Protection of Rural England, in the last fifty years an area of Britain the size of Greater London, Berkshire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire combined has disappeared under the relentless tracks of the bulldozer. On current projections an area the size of Greater London will continue to disappear every ten years. Our picture shows the Yorkshire Dales where of course, planning restrictions currently prevent development. But how long can even such beautiful parts of the country survive? It's time for us all to say enough is enough. But how? By supporting The Countryside Movement. Because urban encroachment is one of the many reasons

for its establishment. Our job will be to give a voice to the countryside, and to represent the five million or so people living and working in rural Britain. We will also speak for millions of people living in Britain's towns who nonetheless recognise the countryside as our greatest national asset. It will be constructive. For example, we in The Countryside Movement recognise that crucial new development, especially where it means new jobs, inevitably means the loss of some of our countryside. But we will also be putting the case strongly for proper redevelopment of derelict land in inner city areas. We will also promote good practice in all aspects of country life and aim to foster better awareness and understanding of the countryside among visitors and the public as a whole. Fundamentally, The Countryside Movement believes that those who live and work in the countryside are best qualified to look

after it. And that for far too long their collective voice has gone unheard amid a crescendo of demands and protests from a tiny minority of the well intentioned but ill informed. If you share this view, what should you do? If you believe that Britain's countryside is a precious part of our national life, and something that should be valued and preserved, then show your support for The Countryside Movement. Fill in the coupon or phone 0117 976 8900. There are no subscription fees. Just the right to make your voice heard.

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Trial of the century: The main player now cuts a sorry figure but the supporting cast is wheeling and dealing with a vengeance

After OJ, the cash still goes round and round

JOHN CARLIN
Washington

Are Marcia Clark and Christopher Darden, the black and white prosecutors in the OJ Simpson trial, having an affair? Will they walk down the aisle together? Or is Darden "seeing" Anita Hill? Will OJ's girlfriend, Paula Barbieri, have him back? Will any woman take him? Who scored the bigger book deal: Johnnie Cochran, OJ's defence lawyer, or Ms Clark?

For all the best efforts of Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich to focus national attention on the budget, it is these and other questions that continue to agitate the celebrity-mad public. "Juicewatch", the tabloid soap opera, just runs and runs.

Some of the questions have been answered. Some still linger, as unresolved as the murders of Nicole Brown and her friend Ronald Goldman. Ms Clark said during a speech at a women's conference in Long Beach, California, on Tuesday that she "burst out laughing" when she read the report in a supermarket tabloid.

But yes, according to sources at the William Morris talent agency, their client Mr Darden is engaging in consenting sex with Anita Hill, a law professor from Oklahoma who leapt to fame a few years back when she accused Clarence Thomas, the Supreme Court judge, of sexu-



Close encounter: Prosecution and defence lawyers crowd together during the OJ trial. From left: Johnnie Cochran, Marcia Clark, Robert Shapiro and Christopher Darden

al harassment. William Morris have an interest in perpetuating the Darden mystique, for they helped him sign a publishing deal worth \$1.3m with HarperCollins: a nice sum but \$2.9m less than Ms Clark secured from Viking for her book.

Mr Cochran has also signed up for a book: *My Journey to Justice*. He has obtained "a very substantial multi-million dollar deal". But his refusal to specify just how much he is getting suggests he is miffed at Ms Clark for having lost the legal battle but winning the Battle of the Books. Alan Dershowitz, another lawyer of the Simpson "Dream Team", is picking up a mere \$500,000 for *Reasonable Doubts*, a book he says will be of an academic bent.

OJ, meanwhile, is cutting a rather sorry figure. He has

been kicked out of his favourite golf club; he has been dumped by his agency, Creative Managements; he continues to be bombarded with death-threats;

he still faces ruin in pending "wrongful death" civil suits brought by the Brown and Goldman families; no one has yet made him an offer to write

a new book; and last weekend he endured the ignominy of being told to stay away from a sports memorabilia convention in Atlantic City: he had been

hoping to sell autographed photographs at \$159.95, of the highway pursuit that preceded his arrest in June 1994.

The word is that OJ spends

most of his time at his Los Angeles home doing nothing – and alone. Ms Barbieri, a 28-year-old *Playboy* and underwear model, dumped him live on ABC television a couple of weeks back. She said she had stayed celibate during OJ's imprisonment but was disappointed in her hopes that he would return a better person. What did it, she said, was his proposal that they should sell photographs of their reunion to the highest tabloid bidder.

"It was all of a sudden. Well, they'll play lots of money for pictures of you and I together," Ms Barbieri told ABC. "And then the next thing I know he's coming. And he's got the photographer with him."

In case anyone has failed to get the moral of the OJ story, that money in America is everything, here's the quote of the year from Ms Barbieri's brother, Michael.

Angry that his father and half-brother were paid to appear on television but that he had missed out, he told *People* magazine when they refused to cough up for an interview: "I'm not going to stab my sister in the back for nothing."

IN BRIEF

Roh arrested on kickback charges

Seoul — Roh Tae Woo, the disgraced former South Korean president, was arrested yesterday on charges of pocketing more than £195m from business tycoons in return for lucrative contracts. More arrests were expected.

Mr Roh, the country's first former or current head of state to be charged with a crime, was pelted with eggs and vilified by demonstrators as he was driven to the Seoul detention house. Minutes earlier, Mr Roh apologised to the nation on the steps of the Seoul prosecutor-general's office. "I'm really sorry," he said. "I will take all responsibility and any punishment."

A 1,000-page arrest warrant said 30 tycoons gave kickbacks to Mr Roh worth 500m won (£420,000) to 25bn won (£21m), a district court judge said.

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Annan — King Hussein of Jordan had a statue of himself (left) removed yesterday, hours before it was to be unveiled. Using a crane, workers lifted the statue out of a public square opposite the prime ministry building before dawn. There had been widespread criticism from Jordanians who saw an uncomfortable parallel with glorification of leaders in Iraq and Syria. "The king was unhappy with it and ordered its removal," said an official of the Amman municipality, which intended the monument as a 60th birthday tribute. Reuter

Saudi dissident 'not welcome in Britain'

London — A Saudi dissident who was quoted yesterday as having said US soldiers killed in a bomb attack in Saudi Arabia were "a legitimate target" is not welcome in Britain, the Foreign Office said. The Middle East Mirror reported Mohammed al-Masari, leader of the Committee for Defence of Legitimate Rights, as having made the remark, according to Foreign Office officials. It was the perception of the common man [in Saudi Arabia] that they [US troops] are a legitimate target. Reuter

Free-trade goal for Asia-Pacific

Osaka — Asia-Pacific ministers adopted a blueprint for regional free trade over the next quarter century. Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation ministers unanimously adopted an "Action Agenda" outlining how to achieve their aim of regional free trade by 2020.

MEPs call for oil embargo on Nigeria

Strasbourg — The European Parliament urged the European Union to impose an oil embargo on Nigeria to put pressure on its military rulers following the executions of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority rights activists last Friday. The MEPs also called for a freeze on European bank accounts of Nigerian leaders, as well as a sports boycott.

Former French minister jailed for gifts

Lyons — A French court sentenced Alain Carignon, a former communications minister, to five years in jail, two of them suspended, on corruption charges. Carignon was convicted for accepting gifts from Lyonnaise des Eaux in return for a water privatisation contract in Grenoble when he was mayor. Reuter

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Rabin investigation: Lax security exposed as Yigal Amir demonstrates how he shot Israeli Prime Minister

Killer with a smile re-enacts assassination

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

Protected by a white bullet-proof vest, Yigal Amir rushes up to a man wearing a paper tag reading "Yitzhak Rabin" and pretends to shoot two bullets into his back. The policeman playing the role of the murdered prime minister crumples to the ground just like the real Rabin did on the night of 4 November.

"You killed Rabin, you piece of garbage," shouts an Israeli watching the re-enactment of the assassination by the back steps of Tel Aviv city hall early yesterday.

Police hold back another man trying to break through their barricade who yells: "You should have protected the prime minister like this."

Mr Amir pays no attention but, like a stage director, pushes policemen into the places where he remembers people were standing moments before he fired 12 days previously.

Everyone except for a single bodyguard - 20 Shin Bet security agency guards were meant to be protecting Rabin that night - is ordered back.

When Mr Amir is satisfied that everybody is in position the policeman in a red check shirt who plays Rabin starts to bow his head to get into a limousine, the door of which is opened. As he does so, Mr Amir moves smartly forward into a wide open space behind him and his right arm goes up as he points a toy gun at Rabin's back.

Police re-enactments of crimes are common in Israel but the demonstration by Mr Amir of how he killed Rabin underlines the chronic failure of Israeli security. Earlier Mr Amir pointed out to police the public phones behind the steps where he waited for hours for Rabin to leave the platform where he was addressing people at a peace rally.

At 3am, when the re-enact-

ment took place, there are not many people in the streets of Tel Aviv; those who did watch were kept well back. The ferocity of the invective - "Take off your kippa [skullcap], you dog!" shouted one onlooker - shows the depth of the anger felt by many Israelis over the killing. At one point Mr Amir appeared to grin at the abuse.

The Shin Bet security service and the police are still fighting over who is responsible for letting Mr Amir get a clear shot at Rabin. In theory the Shin Bet has taken full responsibility for intelligence and operational failures. But it has also revealed that the head of Rabin's security detail had told the police officer in charge on the night of the assassination that there were not enough men

Harmony Street

Jerusalem (AP) - A Hebrew-Arabic adaptation of Sesame Street will bring conflict resolution to Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Children's Television Workshop said yesterday. The programme will include... Israeli segments produced in Tel Aviv and Palestinian segments produced in east Jerusalem.

"We're thinking about having two Sesame Streets, an Israeli street and a Palestinian street, and the possibility of some in-between no man's land where the characters might meet," said Deoud Kuttab of the Jerusalem Film Institute. He said the segments would not always bring Israeli and Palestinian children together, but that "we are breaking much new ground with what we are doing."

Roberta Fahn, an Israeli consultant to the project, said that of all the international Sesame Street productions, this would be the first addressing a specific conflict.

At 3am, when the re-enact-

ment was about to start, the prime minister was about to walk. The police officer replied: "Don't tell me what to do."

Violence is still not far below the surface despite back-pedalling by militant rabbis who had previously denounced Mr Rabin as a traitor. Rabbi Nahum Rabinovitch, who runs a military-theological college with 200 students at Ma'ale Adumim settlement to the east of Jerusalem, while denying allegations that he set the stage for Rabin's death, is recommending to his students that they plant mines if Israeli soldiers try to remove settlers from the West Bank.

In a tape-recording made by an orthodox moderate named Yitzhak Frankenthal and later published in the Israeli press, Rabbi Rabinovitch says that if soldiers come to expel settlers he intends "to scatter the area with roadside bombs like the Arabs do". Asked about Israeli soldiers who might be killed by the mines, Rabbi Rabinovitch says that only "evil men" would obey orders to evacuate settlements.

Dror Adani, one of eight

suspects under arrest as possible members of the conspiracy to kill Rabin, said yesterday he had been sent by Mr Amir to a rabbi to get authorisation to kill the prime minister. He says the rabbi turned him down but it is not known if Mr Amir was able to get the required blessing from another one of Israel's 5,000 orthodox rabbis.

Shimon Peres, the acting prime minister, says he will also take over as Defence Minister when he announces his new cabinet next week, Israel radio reports. This means that Ehud Barak, the former chief of staff, will take over as Foreign Minister. The Defence Ministry will play a critical role in organising the redeployment of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities on the West Bank.



Fatal moment: Amir finds his 'target', a policeman in a red shirt acting as the Israeli leader

Gingrich admits budget tantrum

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

The US budget row degenerated into petulant farce yesterday as the White House heaped ridicule on Newt Gingrich for an outburst of pique which the House Speaker admitted had helped prompt the government shut-down.

The rumpus started at a meeting with reporters on Wednesday, at which Mr Gingrich complained about the shabby treatment accorded him and the Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole, aboard Air Force One during the round trip to Israel for the funeral of Yitzhak Rabin 10 days ago.

"Every President we had ever flown with talked to us at length," the Speaker said, but not Mr Clinton. "You just wonder where is their sense of manners, their sense of courtesy... Was it a sign of utter incompetence or lack of consideration, or was it a deliberate strategy of insult?"

The crowning insult appears to have been when the Congressional delegation was asked to leave by the back door of the President's plane at Andrews Air Force Base at 4am on 7 November. Pique, Mr Gingrich confessed, had helped harden his line on the budget. "It's petty... but I think it's human."

Such a chance to ridicule its arch-foe was too much for the White House to pass up. Leon Panetta, the President's chief of staff, called the Speaker's behaviour "bizarre and petty" and it was outrageous that the government had been shut down "because his ego wasn't stroked". The White House also released photos taken aboard Air Force One showing Mr Clinton deep in conversation with Mr Gingrich and Mr Dole.

The New York Daily News meanwhile skewered Mr Gingrich with a front page depicting him as a screaming toddler with nappy and bottle, below the headline "Cry Baby". Newt's Tantrum, it continued, "He Closed Down Government Because Clinton Made Him Sit at Back of Plane."

For ordinary citizens the inconvenience grows. More than 750,000 federal workers are laid off, with scant hope of a breakthrough before the weekend.

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obituaries/gazette

Professor Ian Gregor

Ian Gregor was an acute literary critic but rarely an assertive one. The best of his work focused on the paradoxes and ambiguities of Modernism as he himself broadly conceived it – a self-conscious, exploratory mode traceable back to the great Victorians.

He had an instinctive relish for the internal conflicts of that movement, the tensions between realism and formalism, self-absorption and social concern, faith and doubt. His favourite writers, who included Arnold and Hardy, Woolf, Forster and Eliot, William Golding and Graham Greene, worked along and across the fault-lines of our age. He saw them as struggling on behalf of us all. Readers had a corresponding responsibility to be attentive, to query sympathetically, to compare notes. Writing, reading, criticism were a shared activity, a Common Pursuit.

In that sense he was true to the spirit of F.R. Leavis, a critic he greatly admired. It was never his way to step back and pronounce judgement. Rather he would submit himself to what he read, and offer his own responses as contributions to continuing debate. Typical is an introductory study in *The Great Web* (1974), his sensitive study of Hardy's fiction: "What is a Hardy novel, what does it feel like to read, why does it take the form it does – these are the questions that shape what I have to say."

If that approach lacked the provocativeness which excites academic notoriety it sponsored rewarding intellectual exchange at every level. Gregor was widely known and respected in the profession, both in Britain and in the United



Gregor: the whole keyboard

States. As both teacher and writer his love of dialogue made him a natural doubles player, a stimulating partner. Some of his best work was produced in collaboration – notably with Brian Nicholas and Mark Kinkead-Weekes. This bias was related to his social warmth. He had an enormous range of friendships, of various sizes, shapes and functions, which he nurtured with the assiduity of a mechanic looking after a complete set of spanners.

As an educationist perhaps his greatest strength was something that would elude the current X-ray tests of Audit, Assessment and Appraisal. He fostered a sense of community and a sense of occasion. His personality was a strong field of force: any group to which he belonged would become a team, evolving its own style and traditions and private jokes. When Kent was a New University, Ian Gregor made a crucial contribution to the development of its distinctive and congenial ethos.

Michael Irwin

*Ian Copeland Smith Gregor, literary critic and teacher; born Newcastle 20 January 1926; Assistant Lecturer, King's College London 1956-58; Lecturer, Edinburgh University 1958-65; Senior Lecturer, University of Kent 1965-69; Professor of Modern English Literature 1969-88 (Emeritus); books include *The Moral and Story (with Brian Nicholas)* 1962, *William Golding: a critical study (with Mark Kinkead-Weekes)* 1967, *Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy: a critical edition* 1971, *The Great Web*: the form of Hardy's major fiction 1974; died Canterbury 13 November 1993.*

Ivan Mandy

Ivan Mandy was one of the most widely read Hungarian writers of the post-1945 period. His popularity stemmed partly from his subject-matter, which was invariably the life of the inhabitants of the poorer districts in Budapest.

Mandy's stories evoke the atmosphere of a partly submerged world, that of old cafés, dilapidated cinemas, unkempt football stadiums. These are the backdrops to the actions of his marginal characters, sometimes with evocative names or nicknames, who lead haphazard, disorganized, or abandoned, lonely lives. Some of these stories barely have a plot, but Mandy is a master of evocative prose: with only a few words he is able to give the reader a strong "impression" of his characters.

Mandy was born in Budapest in 1918. After the divorce of his parents he stayed with his father, a journalist of Bohemian inclinations, and much of his writing is based on the experiences of these early years. He attended various schools in Budapest but did not complete his secondary education. He made his debut during the Second World War with the novel *Csókasz* ("The Park-keeper's Hut", 1943), but it was only some years later with *Francia kultus* ("Adjustable Spanner") and *A húzongévedik uca* ("The Twenty-first Street"), both published in 1948, that he was ac-

cepted as a remarkable new voice in Hungarian literature. In the same year he won the Baumgarten Award. As he was co-editor of the independent and apolitical literary review *Ujhelyi ("New Moon")* until its suppression in 1948, in the first years of Communist rule he had difficulty in getting his work published. His situation began to improve in the mid-Fifties when, after years of marginalized existence, he once again got contracts: first he could publish fiction only for young readers, but his novel *Fabulya feleségei* ("Fabulya's Wives", 1959) showed his real potential. This was a satirical piece on the life of Bohemian and, mainly for political reasons, unemployed intellectuals in the 1950s.

Throughout the 1960s Mandy's popularity grew with collections such as *A paty szélen* ("By the Touchline", 1963) and *Az ordog konyhája* ("The Devil's Kitchen", 1965), which show a certain shift from impressionism towards a kind of nostalgic Surrealism. It was in these years that one could already detect a special "milieu", a hallmark of Mandy's prose. In the 1970s he wrote and published much; almost every year a new book of his reached the best-seller lists.

Mandy wrote a number of film scenarios, as well as plays for the radio, and won many literary awards. Some of his stories were translated into English and appeared in the anthologies *Ocean at the Window* (1980) and *Hungarian Short Stories* (1983). In 1992 he was made an Honorary Citizen of Budapest.

George Gomori

Ivan Mandy, writer; born Budapest 27 December 1918; married 1967 Judit Simon; died 6 October 1993.

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George Gomori

Ivan Mandy, writer; born Budapest 27 December 1918; married 1967 Judit Simon; died 6 October 1993.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

LIFE-BARRIER: Rear-Admiral John Leslie Barber, CVO, DSO (and Bar), peacefully in Hampshire, 14 November 1995, aged 80. Beloved father of Victoria and Sarah. Private cremation. Memorial service at St Mary the Virgin Church, Wiverton, Essex, on Monday 15 January 1996 at 1pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR GENEVA BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Weddings anniversaries in Geneva) should be sent in writing to the *Geneva Edition*, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephone 0171-293 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012), faxed to 0171-293 2010, and arc charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Lectures

National Gallery: Tom Parsons, "Twilight (ii); Uccello: *The Battle of San Romano*", 1pm.
Tate Gallery: Tania String, "Dynasties: the politics of Tudor dynastic picture", 1pm.
British Museum: Helen King, "Mermen, Centaurs and Sirens: exploring the limits of humanity", 1.15pm.
Graham College: Barnard's Inn Hall, London EC1; Professor Heather Couper, "How Big is Space?", 1pm.
Oxford University (Herbert Spencer Lecture, Zoology/Psychology Building): Professor M. Le Doeuf, "Women and Intellectual Work", 5pm.

Birthdays

Mrs Lesley Abdela, founder, All-Party 300 Group for Women in Politics, 50 Sir Jeremy Beecham, chairman, Association of Metropolitan Authorities, 51; Admiral Sir Jeremy Black, former Commander-in-Chief, Royal Home Command, 63; Mr Stephen Bragg, aeronautical engineer, 72; Mr Malcolm Bruce MP, 52; Dr Gerald Bulmer, former Rector, Liverpool Polytechnic, 75; Lord Craymyle, chairman, Craymyle and Co, 72; Mr John Dobson, tenor, 61; Mr Jimmy Dunnachie MP, 65; Mr David Emanuel, fashion designer, 43; Miss Fenella Fielding, actress, 61; Mr Michael Freeman, consultant orthopaedic surgeon, 64; The Rev Dr Kenneth Great, former Free Church Moderator, 77; General Sir Alan Gwynne, Chief of the General Staff, 72; Major-General Harry Haze MP, Minister for Hong Kong, and the Middle East, 72; Mr Colin Haynes, painter, 70; Professor Anthony King, Professor of Government, Essex University, 61; Mr Jeremy Lloyd, cricketer, 41; Mr John Lowther, Lord-Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, 72; Sir Charles Mackerras, conductor, 70; Sir Charles Murphy, director, PEL Group, 62; Lord Polwarth, Vice-Lord-Lieutenant, Borders Region, 79; Mr Jonathan Ross, broadcaster, 35; The Right Rev John Satterthwaite, former Bishop of Gibraltar, 80; Mr Martin Seasees, film director, 70; Miss Debbie Thrower, broadcaster, 38; Mrs James Warwick, actor, 48; Mr Auberon Waugh, journalist, 66; Mr John Wells, writer and actor, 59; Miss Joyce Wethered (Lady Heathcote Amory), golfer, 94.

Anniversaries

Births: Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, scientist and mathematician, 1717; August Ferdinand Möbius, as-

tronomer and mathematician, 1790; George Grote, historian, 1794; Field Marshal Sir Bernard Law Montgomery, first Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, 1877; Deaths: St Margaret, Queen of Scotland, 1093; Catherine II, the Great, of Russia, 1796; Prince-Antoine Rohan, sculptor, 1717; Arthur Eric Raveneau Gill, stone-carver, engraver, typographer and author, 1940; Heriot Villa-Lobos, composer, 1959; Erdélyi-Hamilton Chidlow, president of Ireland, 1974; On this day: Elizabeth I acceded to the throne of England, 1603; the first Battle of the Somme ended, 1916; Kashmir voted to become part of India, 1948; the first London performance of the musical show *Goldspell* was presented, 1971. Today is the Feast Day of Sainte Agathe and Victoria, Sainte Alphæus and Zachæus, St Anianus or Aiguan of Orleans, St Dionysius of Alexandria, St Elizabeth of Hungary, St Gregory of Tours, St Gregory the Wonderworker, St Hilda, the Wonderworker, St Hugh of Lincoln and The Martyrs of Paraguay.

Birthdays

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Sir Nicholas Bonar, MP, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, hosted a lunch held yesterday at Admiralty House, London SW1, in honour of Dr Fernando Naranjo, Minister of External Affairs and Worship, Republic of Costa Rica.

Dinners

Lincoln's Inn: Mr Oliver Lodge, Treasurer, Lincoln's Inn, held a dinner yesterday evening at the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, London WC2, in cele-

brate Grand Day. Among those present were:

Lord and Lady Llewellyn, Lord Temperton; Lord Taylor of Geoffrey; Mr and Mrs James Morris; Sir Ian Gladding; Lord Justice Hirst; Lord Justice Phillips; Mr Justice Waterhouse; Mr Justice Manning; Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter de la Billière; Mr Ronald MacKenzie; Mr Raymond Wheeler-Hubard; Dr John Crook; Mr Steven Prochnow; Mr David Damant; Mr Alan Lang; Capt and Mrs Malcolm Carter.

PPG healthcare group

Professor Derek Elwood gave the PPG healthcare group Baylis Lecture, "Genetics and the inheritance of Disease", yesterday evening at the Royal College of Physicians, London NW1. Sir Peter Gadsden, chairman, PPG healthcare group.

Synagogue services

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath evenings in London 0171-387 4300, Federation of Synagogues; 0181-349 4731, Union of Orthodox Jewish Communities; 0171-278 1663, Reform Synagogue of Great Britain; 0171-289 2573, New London Synagogue (Moorfields); 0171-353 1022.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

Princess Margaret, Patron, Youth Club, Sandhurst, attended the 10th Annual Sports and Games Competition at Sandhurst, organised by the Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps. The competition, which is run by the Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps, is a team competition for the Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps, and the Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps. The competition is run by the Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps, and the Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, the Queen's Life Guard and Horse Guards, Han-

cester Grand Day. Among those present were:

Lord and Lady Llewellyn, Lord Temperton; Lord Taylor of Geoffrey; Mr and Mrs James Morris; Sir Ian Gladding; Lord Justice Hirst; Lord Justice Phillips; Mr Justice Waterhouse; Mr Justice Manning; Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter de la Billière; Mr Ronald MacKenzie; Mr Raymond Wheeler-Hubard; Dr John Crook; Mr Steven Prochnow; Mr David Damant; Mr Alan Lang; Capt and Mrs Malcolm Carter.

Prescription system for pensioners unlawful

LAW REPORT

1 November 1995

Regina v Secretary of State for Health, ex parte Richardson; European Court of Justice, Luxembourg, 19 October 1995

The setting of different ages for exemption from prescription charges for men and women, to correspond with the different pensionable ages for men and women for granting pensions, was not allowed by Directive 79/76/EEC, which deals with the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women.

In appearance he could have modelled for an austere Roman bust, a look which suited his sometimes imperious manner. Asked on stage by a nervous young actor what he should do next, he furiously whispered: "Not much – and probably just as badly."

It was fitting that his last performances, as the Inquisitor in Schiller's *Don Carlos*, were given at the Glasgow Citizens, in an environment that he had always found adventurous, and congenial and where his intelligence and fortitude with which he faced his long illness was the fact that he missed only two performances and then playing on stage until six weeks before his death.

Derek Granger

Tristram Jellinek, actor and antique dealer; born London 23 August 1933; died London 4 November 1995.

I am surprised that your obituary of Gilles Deleuze [by James Kirkup, 8 November] fails to mention his involvement in left-wing politics after 1968, writes Keith Flett. He was often to be seen on left-wing demonstrations, which, paradoxically, had

the effect of increasing the audience amongst the Left for his philosophical writings, which were not in any real sense left-wing at all.

In this way Deleuze played a small but significant part in the great retreat from 1968.

Gilles Deleuze

established a postgraduate department, with eclectic but rigorous entry requirements and an extremely wide-ranging syllabus. Only years later did I discover that his proposals had met considerable opposition at Senate, where his dry wit had ensured that he won the day.

His colleagues and students shared the intellectual excitement of his department, which combined the visionary ("We cannot afford not to have dreams") and the practical ("Never forget the drains"). My Glasgow years gave me a sense of urgency, purpose and practical pride in town planning and I suspect that most of my fellow students felt the same.

He was who established the department – the third in the city (and this at the time of point-blocks, inner-city motorways and municipal Stalinism: imagine the jokes). But Bob Grieve, as ever, had a dream and, as ever, made it happen. He wanted to produce polymaths, in the true Scottish tradition – men and women to follow in the steps of John Muir and Patrick Geddes. So he

was no factor to justify a derogation from the principle that a ruling on the interpretation of Community law took effect from the date on which the rule interpreted entered into force. There was no reason to limit the temporal effect of this judgment so that the direct effect of article 4(1) of Directive 79/76/EEC was not necessarily linked to the difference between the pensionable ages for men and for women and was not therefore covered by article 7(1)(a).

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JULY 1995

Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party
The idea of sitting down at the same table as Sinn Fein is anathema to him. Opposes Dublin's involvement in talks about Northern Ireland. Would probably boycott round-table conference, at least initially.

Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein
Has called for immediate all-party talks. Says Britain only raised issue of decommissioning as a precondition after the ceasefire. Argues that no ceasefire in Irish history required surrender of weapons before comprehensive talks.

John Hume, leader of the nationalist SDLP
Says all party talks should start at once. Argues that the important issue is not whether the IRA still has arms, but whether they plan to use them. Is convinced that Sinn Fein is committed to peaceful politics.

David Trimble, leader, Ulster Unionist Party
The IRA would have to decommission arms, and perhaps disband altogether. But if the IRA surrendered even a few weapons, Trimble would come under heavy pressure from the British Government to join talks.

John Bruton, premier, Republic of Ireland
Ready for all-party talks now. Favours dropping the decommissioning precondition. Has proposed new approach whereby talks would go ahead six weeks after an international commission had established Sinn Fein's good intentions.

John Major, Prime Minister
Demands that the IRA begins to decommission weapons before Sinn Fein joins talks. Wants international commission to arrange terms for dealing with IRA's arsenal. But Government has backtracked before, could do so again.



Will they ever get round that table?

Is the once unthinkable now possible: a lasting peace without a political settlement in Northern Ireland? Jack O'Sullivan reports

Today more than 80 republican and loyalist prisoners will walk free from Northern Ireland's jails. Their early release shows how the peace process can still deliver results. But today's scenes will mask a dangerous reality: progress towards a political settlement, the vital underpinning of peace, is in deep trouble.

Fifteen months after the IRA laid down its arms, all-party talks look like no more than a distant hope. Britain will not sanction them until the IRA makes at least a token surrender of arms. The Provisionals have, in a rare public statement, refused point blank to make the gesture, leaving neither side with much room for manoeuvre.

Meanwhile, the relationship between the Irish Republic and Britain - the rock upon which a settlement could be built - has deteriorated of late. President Clinton's planned visit later this month to Belfast, Dublin and London may be abandoned and, in any case, holds little prospect of breaking through the impasse.

Worse still, there are signs

that guns and bombs are being taken from arsenals that have remained undisturbed for months. A week ago the Irish police discovered 1,700 lbs of explosives just across the border in the Republic. People believe that the massive bomb was to be used in an attack on

that was apparently remains committed.

But the fact that a bombing was even considered indicates a change in the atmosphere in Northern Ireland. A few months ago, as one republican remarked, even extremists would not have contemplated such a "spectacular". They would have feared being rounded up by the rest of the republican community for endangering potential gains from the peace process. Now, after such a long stalemate, the opprobrium is diminished. There seems to be less to lose.

So does this mean it is only

a matter of time before the Provisional IRA eventually takes up arms again?

There is certainly frustration among northern republicans.

It would be wrong to assume that frustration will persuade the IRA to unpack its Semtex

a security target in Northern Ireland.

Amid the political stalemate, is peace breaking down?

No, it is the immediate answer. Last week's foiled bombing was a plot of the Provisional IRA, by far the best-armed republican element. The blame

has been laid on the military wing of Republican Sinn Fein, which broke away from the Provisionals in 1986. It is a small, insignificant group, which claims to be the guardian of purist, uncompromising republican ideals. The activities of this fundamentalist splinter group do not signal a general breakdown in the ceasefire, to which the IRA apparently

cans. Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, speaks of the many changes since peace broke out. But, complicit republicans, most secure measures that would have been ordered if the IRA had been defeated, rather than concessions to a supposedly potent force.

Many republicans feel that the potential gains envisaged one year ago have not been fulfilled. Twelve months ago Sinn Fein was on a roll. Albert Reynolds, the then Taoiseach, was at one with Gerry Adams and prepared to press Sinn Fein's case with London. In contrast, Mr Reynolds' successor, John Bruton, is far less friendly with Sinn Fein. He won nationalist plaudits by attacking London last weekend, but Mr Bruton is by instinct anti-republican. He wants to woo the Unionists and has as a consequence cold-shouldered Sinn Fein, thereby alienating Mr Adams.

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Wilkes's

Wilkes was not alone in giving a private cheer at Brian Mawhinney being sprayed with orange paint by Asylum Bill protesters outside the House of Commons. The video of the incident was apparently played more than 10 times over lunchtime by gleeful BBC staff at the nearby BBC Westminster Studios at Millbank. The chairman of the Conservative Party has few friends at the BBC after railing against the corporation for left-wing bias at the party conference, and some were said to be cheered up enormously by the video.

There may also have been a faint cheer from inside the Blue Bunker itself. All is not well inside Central Office since the arrival of the Ulster Hardman, who gathered his staff for a pep talk yesterday. Morale has plummeted, and the departure of Hugh Colver, the former head of communications, is regarded as a symptom of a deeper malaise.

Nor was there much sympathy in the Commons. One of those close to the chairman quipped: "He was overcome with emulsion."

John Ward, the Prime Minister's parliamentary private secretary, is an unassuming chap, who stays quietly in the background. But Wilkes hears he deserves a medal, and possibly the modern Russian equivalent of the Order of Lenin.

Ward was all that stood between Major and a monumental gaffe over the premature reports of the death of Boris Johnson.

Wilkes has now reveal the full story. Tory backbenchers were setting down for Prime Minister's question time when a paper went off in the chamber, belonging to Alan Duncan, Brian Mawhinney's parliamentary private secretary. The message came from Tim Collins, temporarily restored as head of communications at Central Office. It said the BBC was about to announce that the Russian president was dead and wanted a reaction from a minister.

Panic set in on the Conservative



Mawhinney: orange disorder

backbenches. "We'll have to tell the Prime Minister," said some of the younger, more eager MPs. But Ward is made of wiser stuff. "It will put him off his stroke," he said, and refused to pass the message on. As a result, Major was not told and he was spared the reddest of red faces.

Major and Boris owe Ward one for that.

Wilkes has tried his best, kept debates going when nobody wanted to speak, put down planted questions for ministers, laughed at Major's jokes, and even voted for the blasted Government, but loyalty counts for nothing these days. The Backbencher of the Year Award has slipped by for another year. The word around the teacoom is that it will go next week to John Redwood, the unsuccessful challenger for Major's crown.

Perhaps next year Wilkes should throw his hat in the ring, if that's what it takes.

The Prince: gassing up on Wales

Parliament Street, and even the unfaltering portrait of the Prince which makes the heir to the throne look like a paranoid bloodhound. However, Wilkes learns with deep dismay that the PoW has been brushing up on the Principality by having a private briefing with the Secretary of State for Wales. First he has a chat with Redwood, the Vulcan; now he's been having a private word with his teenage successor, William Hague. Neither of them is Welsh, and both know as much about Wales as Wilkes's left shoe.

Des Wilson and Olly Grendler, both former leading lights in the Liberal Democrats, have become the Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders of the PR world. Des, now with the PR firm London News, shared a table at a glitzy PR awards dinner with his old friend Olly, who has moved to Shelter. As the night wore on, Des grew more bitchy about the winners, which was a bit tricky for Olly, darling, because, as Joanna would say in *Absolutely Fabulous*, you see, sweetie, she was one of the judges, and his agency didn't get a prize.

Staff at the Department of Health broke into joyous cheering at the State Opening of Parliament. Was this a rush of royalist blood to their heads? No, simply they had heard that their old boss, Virginia Bottomley, had been turned back from Parliament by the police, because she was 15 minutes late for the ceremony and her car could not get through the security. Funny how she brings out the best in people.

Wilkes's old chum Lord Wakeham has been privately boasting that he has had an immediate effect on Fleet Street as the head of the Press Complaints Commission. He has closed down the telephone line set up by Sun hacks for dancing partners of Prince William to switch on his social activities now that he has started at Eton. The "snog line", as it was informally known (Wilkes cannot imagine why) was a breach of the boy prince's privacy, and thus Wakeham intervened.

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Beware a new wage spiral

How does a pay rise of 5 per cent sound to you? It is higher than inflation and well ahead of the average pay settlement. It is certainly better than the public sector will get this year. Yet once you stop to think about how much harder you are working, the new contracts which make your job less secure, the growing profits your company is making, and the soaring salary of the chief executive, then you might not feel it is unreasonable.

Your reaction matters a great deal to the economists who are watching the dispute. Ford over the management's pay offer of 4.75 per cent. If pay settlements start rising following the Ford example, we could be in for the wage boom that the Bank of England fears. But if the rest of the economy remains cautious and subdued, unaffected by the deals done at Dagenham, then pay and inflation could keep crawling along at their current rate.

In the past Ford's pay settlement mattered a lot. Wage increases at Ford used to be "the going rate" — they set the standard in the car industry and for the rest of manufacturing. But it would be surprising if the old situation still prevailed. Wage bargaining has become increasingly decentralised and the workforce less unionised. Pay setters in the service industries probably focus far more on their own profits and skill shortages than they do on manufacturing pay. And as employment in the service sector goes on rising, while employment in manufacturing continues to drop, then events at Ford matter that much less in the context of the whole economy.

Although Ford's pay packets may no longer be the trigger that causes rising wage bills across the economy, what happens there may still reflect the feelings of workers and management elsewhere. The Ford workforce is so fed up its members are prepared to strike for what they see as their fair share of the proceeds from productivity gains of the past few years — whether it be through wage rises above 5 per cent, or cuts in the working week in line with European colleagues. There could well be similar demands for wage rises across the economy which have been bottled up after several years of wage constraints.

Service-sector wages won't necessarily be immune to these pressures either. For although weekly earnings in the services remain subdued because there are so many part-time workers, hourly earnings for full-time workers have already been increasing at a rapid rate — 4.6 per cent in the year to last spring.

So just because the rest of industry and the economy no longer blindly follows Ford's lead, doesn't mean our pay is not about to start going up. The optimistic view is that the labour market has changed in such a dramatic way, that the old British wage inflation spirals have been defeated. The pessimists believe it is just a matter of time before old pressures resurface — wage claims could even start accelerating in the spring. The Bank of England is right to remain worried about wages, for it could take months, even years to be sure who is right. By which time it could be too late.

Keep fruit on our streets

It must be hell for the man from the council. All those complaints from aggrieved tenants, noise-averse neighbours, unpruned owners of uncollected rubbish — and so little time or money to deal with them. At least that's what they say. In which case, why has Derbyshire Council spent so much effort in getting a judgement against an Ilkeston greengrocer, against whose pavement display of fruit and vegetables no one had complained? The phrase "have they nothing better to do?" comes irresistibly to mind.

Ah, yes says Derbyshire, but it's not so simple. True, no one had objected to Brian Godfrey's sidewalk plums, and yes, there had been no accidents or incidents, but the law is the law. "Pavements are for people and have to be kept free of obstructions for the benefit of pedestrians", apparently.

This argument mirrors that of Camden and Westminster councils in London, when this summer's balmy heat brought the tables and chairs of dozens of bistros and cafés out on to the capital's grimy pavements. Justifying the imposition of a series of fines and the sequestrations of some offending furniture, Westminster's Robert Moreland declared himself to be acting on behalf of "the partially sighted, disabled and pram pushers", forced to negotiate "unauthorised" tables and chairs (authorised ones, presumably emit a high-pitched noise to warn the partially sighted and fold down into ramps on the approach of wheelchairs or buggies).

There is much in Mr Moreland's

argument. There must indeed be some restriction on the rights of traders to take over the public's footpaths — even though there seems to be none on the rights of cable companies utterly to disrupt the ability of almost anyone to go almost anywhere. Café owners, greengrocers and stall-holders must be considerate towards pedestrians, and where real nuisance is caused must be restrained.

There is a sneaking suspicion, however, that what is at issue here is not so much public nuisance as an official desire to control everything. Mr Godfrey, as far as we can see, was causing no problem. And, lest we forget, Derbyshire council last featured in these columns when it instituted a policy of not employing smokers. It isn't just the Labour councils which seem to be prone to jobsworthiness.

As reported today, Tory Westminster is trying to insist that it is entitled to charge fruiterer Eric Carter for his pavement overspill — despite the fact that the space does not belong to the council. Their attitude appears to be that if something exists in public space, then they should get the benefit from it — or close it down.

Most people would like to see the growth of a lively (if regulated) pavement culture in Britain. The colour of fruit stalls and the hum of cafés is infinitely preferable to a dingy mélange of rubbish bins and cracked paving stones. Cars — parked and moving — are far more of a problem to pedestrians and street-users than any exuberant displays of artichokes. The man from the council should get his priorities right.

Lovely Rita, the prostitute who doesn't offer sex

Although I visit London at various intervals, or, to put it another way, as little as possible, I am still surprised by the amount of personal messages placed by people inside London phone boxes — announcements about a new Mexican girl in town, or busty Australian beauty, or Naughty Nina, and so on.

People who have mobile phones won't know about all this — indeed, people may well buy mobile phones for the single puritanical purpose of getting away from the constant array of prostitutes' cards they are forced to look at in phone boxes — but I know all about this, because every time I go innocently into a London phone box I suddenly get culture shock all over again.

But on my last visit to London I saw something quite different in a kiosk. I saw a prostitute's card which read as follows. "Rita promises you NO Hanky Panky! Hands off Rita! Keep your distance with lovely Rita! Ask for nothing and you won't be disappointed!"

This sounded a bit out of the ordinary. A girl who took your money and then didn't sell you her body.

Or was it code for something so recondite that I didn't even know about it?

I was intrigued.

I was so intrigued that I made a note of the number.

Let's be honest — I rang her there and then.

"I am doing a survey of London phone box cards," I improvised hastily when Rita answered the phone. "I was just wondering what sort of customer you were catering for."

"Why don't you come along and find out, sir?" she said, and gave me an address. "Bring a video if you like." Then she rang off.

I think if she had called me "darling" or "love", I wouldn't have gone along to see her. But being called "sir" reassured me. I felt safe. I went along to see her.

"Did you bring a video?" she said. "No matter. There's plenty of other things to do."

"What kind of video did you expect me to bring?" I said nervously. "Sex, you mean?"

"Don't be stupid," she said. "Football videos are what punters



MILES KINGTON

normally bring. Wildlife documentaries are next popular. I draw the line at feature movies. They take hours."

"You mean — people can only have sex while their favourite TV programme is on?"

She stared at me.

"Sex? What are you talking about? They come here to get away from it."

Gradually, as she talked, the truth came out. Most prostitutes catered for men who had little or no sex life at home, but Rita catered for another minority — those who had too much, men who suffered from sexually demanding wives or who for some reason had gone off the whole thing.

"You'd be surprised how many

men are just settling down for a quiet evening with a book or the TV when they are dragged off to bed by a concupiscent wife," said Rita. "All they want to do is be left in peace and quiet."

"That's what I give them here. They bring round the programmes they've missed and watch them here, while I potter around doing the housework or sewing. There's one bloke who always brings his ironing round and likes to watch me do that, while we chat. Of course, I have to charge him extra."

"But football on video is the main sheet of men. It's often on late at night, and they're dragged off to bed for sex by the wife at that time, so they tape it and bring it round here, and watch it as they would have liked to watch it. I've got several regulars who do that. Some games I see four or five times over. And I must always remember never to reveal the result if I know it in advance."

Does she have to watch the programmes as well? Is that part of the deal?

"No, not necessarily, although you do find the occasional man who

gets a real kick out of explaining football to a woman in technical terms. So many women obviously get turned off by sport that when the men say to me, 'Did you see the way he drew his man and created space there?' and I say, 'Very nice running off the ball, too' — one of the phrases I've picked up, don't know what it means — they go red with pleasure."

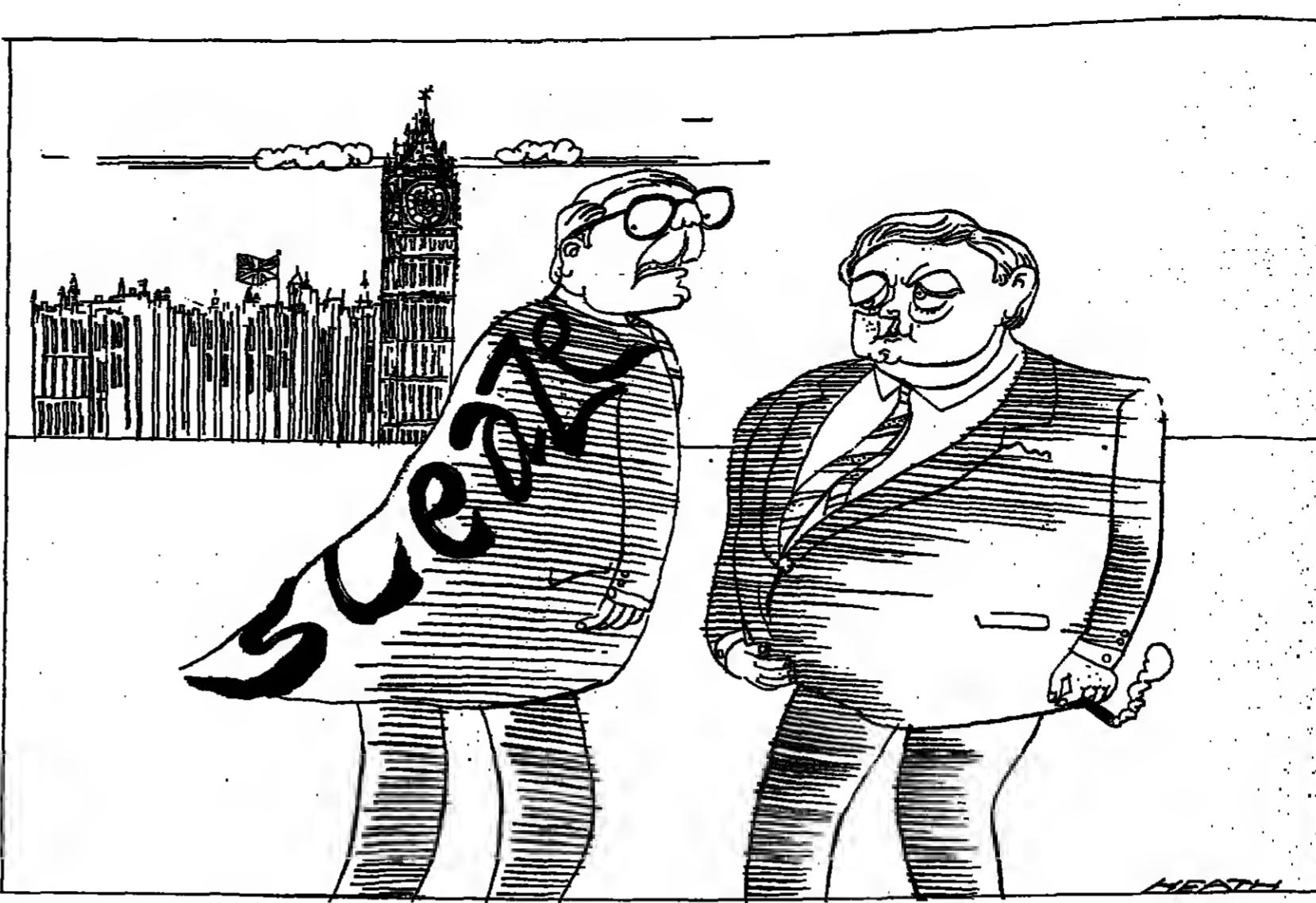
"But what they like best, if you can believe it, is for me to dress up in something very revealing or skimpy and come smooching past saying, 'Are you coming to bed now?'

Why do they like that?

"Because it gives them a chance to shout at me, 'Oh, go and take a jump in the lake,' or, 'I wouldn't go to bed with you if we were on a desert island together!' — all those things they've longed to say to their wives, but have never dared. At least they know that when they come to the door, the hour they spend here they are quite free from sex."

"Funny old thing, human nature, isn't it?"

I think she may be right.



I think it's paint ... whatever it is, it won't come off

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Does BSE harm people?

From Dr R. G. Will and others
Sir: Professor Richard Lacey asserts (Another View, 15 November) that BSE is "now established as a cause of sporadic Creutzfeld-Jakob disease (CJD) in humans".

This is not true. CJD occurs round the world with a relatively constant incidence, including countries that are free of both scrapie and BSE. In 1994, the incidence of CJD in the UK was lower than in the Netherlands and in Austria, which are both free of BSE. The occurrence of CJD in dairy farmers in the UK is unlikely to be directly linked to BSE, because CJD occurs with a similar frequency in dairy farmers in France, Germany and Italy, which are countries with a minimal potential occupational exposure to BSE. The occurrence of CJD in teenagers in the UK is tragic, but this does not establish a link with BSE, because CJD has previously been described in teenagers in other countries in which there could not possibly be a link with BSE.

The primary remit of the CJD Surveillance Unit is to determine whether there is a link between BSE and CJD by detailed investigation of all cases of CJD in the UK. We have not yet established a link and the evidence on which this statement is based has been recently published in an Annual Report. However, it is clearly imperative to continue to study closely the epidemiology of CJD, as the long incubation periods in CJD and other prion-protein diseases indicates that it will be many years before a theoretical link between CJD and BSE can be excluded.

Yours faithfully,

R. G. WILL
JAMES W. IRONSIDE
M. ZEIDLER
National Creutzfeld-Jakob Disease Surveillance Unit
Western General Hospital
Edinburgh
15 November

When costs increase Taiwan will say ta-ta

From Mr Anthony Smallhorn
Sir: Your Business Comment

"Britain in the back door to Europe" (15 November) is absolutely correct about the nature of the investment by Chungwha in making cathode ray tubes in Scotland, but your arguments and warnings must be taken further. Taiwan and Korea were once cheap labour economies, which is why the Japanese, in particular, invested heavily in them. When labour rates, and manufacturing costs, for simple products such as televisions went too high the Japanese simply pulled out.

Four years ago, after manufacturing in Pusan City on the south coast of Korea for more than 20 years, a Japanese company closed factory manufacturing exactly the same product as Chungwha will be making in Scotland. Three thousand people lost their jobs, and the same company set up a production

line in Thailand. Sooner or later, labour rates in Thailand will rise too far, and the company will move again, probably to an emerging African country. The warning for us is that it is even easier to move out of Britain as we have one of most free money markets in the world, and there is no skill in manufacturing this type of product.

Some £80m and a few thousand jobs may generate a few votes for the Conservative Party, and will bring relief to an area where unemployment is well over 2 per cent above the national average, but let us be warned by what is happening all over Asia. Who knows, the Taiwanese will simply pull out of Britain. This will not build an "enterprise culture".

None in Westminster has any concept of "enterprise" beyond the ability to invest in businesses linked to privatised utilities, the NHS and local government.

Ecstasy v Prozac

From Dr Joanna Nakielny
Sir:

In the article "Ecstasy and the agony" (Section Two, 15 November), Polly Toynbee asks what the difference is between a licensed medicine, such as Prozac, and a "street drug", such as Ecstasy. One very important difference is that licensed medicines have undergone extensive and rigorous testing in clinical trials. The results of these trials are then reviewed by regulatory authorities, such as the Medicine Control Agency here in the UK, which must satisfy itself as to the safety, efficacy and quality of any proposed new medicine before granting it a licence.

Ecstasy, by contrast, is an illegal drug that is not licensed for the treatment of any medical condition.

Yours faithfully,
JOANNA NAKIELNY
Associate Medical Director
Lilly Industries
Basingstoke, Hampshire
15 November

Round and round the round table

From Sir Fred Catherwood
Sir:

Without John Hume's courage and persistence, there would have been no ceasefire in Northern Ireland, so we all owe him a great deal. But he is wrong to insist on yet another round-table between the parties ("It's good to talk, Mr Major", 15 November).

Once he brought Sinn Fein into the process, he created conditions which made an Irish settlement bilaterally possible by negotiations between the two sovereign governments.

It is not just that the Unionists will not sit down with — as they say — a gun pointed at their heads, but that even if they accepted John Hume's arguments, they would have to make the settlement stick with all those Unionists who argued, when it came to a referendum, that a treaty agreed under threat of force was not binding.

By agreeing that the next step is yet another round table, the

British Government is now predictably boxed in by the incompatible preconditions laid down by Sinn Fein and the Unionists.

And for what? The last round-table was a disaster and there is no reason to suppose that a new one would be any better.

The two governments have already achieved an agreed position. They each need to negotiate bilaterally with the parties who look to them and then with each other; and IRA arms and British troops can now be part of that negotiation.

At some point they must persuade the parties who look to them that they have got the best deal they can.

Then, and only then, should they bring them round a table, pen in hand, to sign the settlement.

Yours faithfully,
FRED CATHERWOOD
Cambridge
15 November

Le Shuttle U-turn

From Mr Christopher Laming
Sir:

Eurotunnel doubled capacity, and then moaned when competitor activity intensified. They tried premium-pricing their product, as they told their shareholders they would, but not enough customers wanted to buy. So now they have given that up and joined the economic world they helped create. In doing so Le Shuttle has become another ferry company. The difference is that it costs its owners £10m to set up.

CHRISTOPHER LAMING
Head of Communications
Stena Line
Ashford, Kent

How the EU can get serious

From Mr Robin Teverson
Sir:

Your leader today ("The £2bn question" (15 November)) on fraud and waste in the EU correctly concludes "It is time the member states got serious about the problem". But you are short on prescriptions for making them do just that. The Court of Auditors, equally, makes no recommendations on what Europe can do to stir the member states into action, but there is no shortage of suggestions from other sources:

In the Liberal Democrat group, we have been pressing for a few simple changes that could quickly bring results. First, the European Commission needs a bigger stick to wave at the member states if it is to persuade them to act. In some areas it can withhold funding if it thinks fraud is going unchecked. Extend that to all EU-funded schemes, and you would soon see action.

Second, we need to make transparent a process that is all too opaque. Reports on fraud drawn up by the member states are prepared in secret, which leaves us all in the dark and suggests that they have something to hide. The reports must now be published.

Third, the European Parliament should be allowed to set up committees of inquiry. As a body independent of both the commission and the member states, it is well placed to arbitrate where culpability is in dispute.

These ideas are not the whole answer, but they are part of it, and they have growing support. In an aside yesterday, one member of the court suggested that, were it able to make such recommendations, similar ideas would be among them. For the sake of efficiency, accountability and, not least, lower taxes all round, it is, as you say, time to get serious.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN TEVERSON
MEP for Cornwall and Plymouth
West (Lib Dem)
European Parliament
Strasbourg
15 November

criticism is nonsense, as any student of basic economics knows.

comment

15

Auntie in a flap over the F-word

BBC guidelines are the closest we have to a new prayerbook, but heaven help the taste committees

The man from the BBC who looks after taste and decency projected a silent graphic on to the screen. He ran through it fast, but I did catch the top of the list of words with the percentage of the public who thought them totally unbroadcastable:

coot	74 per cent
****	70 per cent
*****	70 per cent
***	55 per cent
****	55 per cent

What the BBC proved at its seminar on taste and decency this week is that the subject is easily reduced to farce.

The BBC invited its leading critics to debate with programme controllers and governors for a whole day of filth and violence. Clips from Ben Elton's *Backup* and *Lady Chatterley* interspersed the discussions. For the battle over broadcasting standards represents the moral dilemmas argued over in every household, every newspaper, every pub. For lack of any other binding institution – no widely attended church, or any other generally accepted moral standard-bearer – the poor old BBC must bear the brunt of representing to society what it thinks of itself, what it thinks its standards are. BBC guidelines are the closest we have to a new prayerbook, and as a result the best battleground for all our moral anguish.

Having recently come from inside the walls of this sometimes monstrous, yet magnificent citadel, the internal discussions day after day were some of the most stimulating and intellectually absorbing but also sometimes the most mind-numbingly desperate nonsense. The burden of responsibility of a compulsory licence fee weighs heavily on BBC executives: £86.50 a year is a harsh poll tax on every household. It puts some of the

poorest into prison, for non-payment of fines – many of them people who barely watch the BBC and are positively hostile. It makes everyone jumpy, an organisation of panicky paranoiacs who quiver when the most mindless leader writer or backbencher says boo. Accused by many, including many at this week's seminar, as cultural imperialists, ivory tower dictators, arrogant and unaccountable, the truth inside is quite different.

Of course, the corporation arrived at the seminar well-armed with audience research showing how much more liberal attitudes towards sex on television have become in the past 10 years. The most conservative groups had shifted greatly, with older women moving from 33 to 41 per cent toleration of sex and nudity. Changing attitudes towards homosexuality were most marked, with a 20 per cent drop in the numbers who find it offensive.

However, the fact that the viewers' values are on the slide was certainly not going to mollify the moralists. One of them put the dilemma succinctly: if the broadcasters keep pumping out sex, nudity and rude words they themselves change public sensitivity. There is something devious about debasing the currency and justifying your behaviour by proving you are in tune with the people when you are a prime cause of the cultural shift you are measuring. If more people find gays on television acceptable now than 10 years ago, that must be in large part because in the past 10 years it has featured in virtually every soap.

What, someone asked, does the BBC think it is doing? Does it set moral standards and stick by them, does it follow whatever its polling says its viewers' standards are, or does it see itself in the forefront of positively setting out to change (and by implication liberalise) public opinion? This is tricky territory, since a simple "yes" to



POLLY TOYNBEE
The BBC is not
a pulpit, nor
is it a mere
crowd-pleaser

any of these is plainly both absurd and presumptuous. The BBC is not a pulpit, but nor is it a mere crowd-pleaser. It is not a slave to opinion polls, but an innovator and a leader, then of course it does have standards of its own, but try defining them and the eels slip through the fingers.

Fine words can cover a multitude of difficulties. From the director-general we had "eternal values, truth and quality, excellence of thought and execution." Eternal values? Good heavens, we have just had a presentation that shows there are none, with everything constantly on the move.

For many, the argument descends here into unsatisfactory greyness and murk. But the truth of the matter is murky. Bernard Manning, Jim Davidson or Ben Elton – who makes you laugh, and who offends you most? Taste is so impossibly personal that only the grossest trespassing on new territory draws a clear consensus. (There is far more agreement on violence.)

The moralists want everything clear-cut. News and Current Affairs, with their strict guidelines, scored well. How

much easier to make rules on how much blood, how many bodies, how much detail in the Rosemary West case. Though Martin Bell has been saying that he thinks television over-sensitises the horror of war, with all that banging of the guns and unrealistically no one apparently blown to bits as a result. So even here there is some doubt.

But when it comes to drama and humour, the sands shift so fast beneath the feet. With heavy heart I heard one governor announce that the seminar showed the clear need for more guidelines to cover these grey areas. Heaven help the luckless teams of taste-formers who will sit on those committees. Canute-like, the BBC can try to defy the cultural waves of Tarantino or Stone, the Playboy channel and worse that flow in from elsewhere with every tide. It can trim the worst blood and sex off Hollywood movies, but it cannot command the global culture of the ether.

The moralists will shake their heads and say, there you go again – this moral relativism takes us down the path to perdition. They see a steady lead to the sewer, though they never say where they would have stopped the clock. If they mean the golden year of 1952, year of coronation and conquest of Everest, perhaps we should show a night of programmes from that cultural desert of an era.

The moral panic model of society is a slippery slope to the cesspit. But another model is a continuous line of change with some higher standards and some grosser vulgarisations. To be sure, *Blind Date* has become pornographic. *Don't Give Up the Day Job* is a humiliation too far, and *Lady Chatterley* was plain bad. But there is now little of the casually sexist, racist, homophobic beastliness of yesteryear, and the drama is unrecognisably more subtle and sophisticated.

Of course, the BBC tries to wriggle out of its unwelcome role as the nation's moral guardian and weather-vane. Sidestepping the trap of whether it is an opinion-former or opinion-follower, instead they talk of the fragmenting audience and the duty to give every licence-payer something indispensable. Gone are the days when a nation sat down together to watch the other side until the wildlife comes on.

However, forced to play the moral arbiter of our times, the BBC is doomed forever to abuse from every side, damned sometimes for cultural or political cowardice and damned sometimes when it is brave. Lame and tame, some say, while the *Telegraph* lams into its dashing scoop of the year – the Diana interview on Monday's *Panorama*. *The nation's Auntie* is also the nation's Aunt Sally, since pleasing all the punters all the time is quite simply impossible.

Although losing some cultural power as channels proliferate, the BBC will always have schizophrenic obligations. Bring in the crowds, bring on the excellence, do those programmes that no one else will do and yet be popular. Please the uneducated who pay the same as the erudite, but please don't be vulgar or low.

So it is hardly surprising that whenever the BBC presents its face in public, it covers its confusion in enough high-flown nonsense to make a politician blush. Sanctimonious language will always be a BBC imperative: "Our responsibility is to ensure that all that we do is driven by a moral purpose which rests on the basic pillars of decency, rather than the shifting sands of taste." Well, humbug. The BBC sits on the same sandbank of time as the rest of us.

Paul Gregg and Jonathan Wadsworth advise Kenneth Clarke to take a penny or two off the lowest rate

The kindest cut for everyone

To murder an old adage, two things are certain in life: death and that Kenneth Clarke is going to cut taxes in the upcoming Budget. What we don't know is who will benefit from the tax cuts and by how much. They could be staged over several years. They could involve a penny or two off the basic rate of 25p, or even the abolition of inheritance tax. In such a highly charged political climate it is probably naïve to hope that the nature of the tax cuts should fulfil any function other than picking up votes. But some kinds of tax cuts are a lot more desirable than others. And with possibly billions and billions of pounds at stake, it is worth engaging in the debate.

Increasingly people without work live in a home where no one else has a job



Ken Clarke: will he do the right thing?

The real question is not tax cuts for the rich versus tax cuts for the poor; it is how you use tax cuts as a way of getting people back to work. For the growing numbers of working-age Britons who are dependent on benefits form a serious constraint on any government achieving its economic, social and tax objectives. Benefit expenditure on working-age claimants and their dependents rose from £19bn in 1978/9 to £45bn in 1994/5 – and spending has grown despite frequent attempts to scale back eligibility and reduce the real value of benefits.

So why has spending on benefits grown so fast? Part of the problem is the number of people who are out of work. But this isn't the whole story. Non-employment follows a familiar pattern, rising in recessions and falling in recoveries.

But the distribution of work has also changed. Increasingly people without work live in households where no one else has a job either – so there is no one with a wage to support the family, and everyone has to depend on benefits. The number of households with no earned income grew from 8 per cent in 1979 to 20 per cent in 1994. Even during economic recovery, the proportion of workless households

has scarcely fallen. What this means is that most of the new jobs created have gone to individuals living in households where another adult is already in work.

Once families end up on benefits, they have a harder and harder time getting off again. In the past, if your whole family was out of work, you would be quicker finding a new job than someone else who had other family to depend on. Now those in workless households take twice as long to find new work as those whose partners are in work. Benefit dependence has grown not because new families are having to claim benefits, but because those on benefits already are taking much longer to get off. In 1979 the typical workless family spent 18 months

on benefit before anyone in the family found a job. By 1994, this had risen to four-and-a-half years.

The core of the problem – according to a growing body of evidence from left and right – is that work increasingly does not pay. For the family out of work for several years is hardly better off when one of their members finds a job – largely because the wages available in the kinds of jobs they are usually able to get are so very low. For these "entry jobs" are incredibly badly paid and are worth in real terms no more than they were in 1979. A third of entry jobs pay less than £4,000 a year and two-thirds less than £7,000. Virtually none of the jobs that the unemployed are able to get pay wages that the average British worker would

recognise. Combine this with a benefit system designed for a different era, and the incentives to take these jobs are minimal.

Taxes make matters worse. Astoundingly these entry jobs are still taxed, often at the introductory rate of 20p. And government policies since 1992 have not only been regressive, they have added to the problem of lousy incentives to find work. Increasing council rents, the council tax, fuel tax, increases in NI contributions and failures fully to update tax allowances have all reduced the gap between benefit incomes and low-paid work.

The question for Kenneth Clarke at the end of this month is whether he can use his tax cuts where he failed with his tax increases, to help

people off benefits and into work. And cutting the basic rate of 25p is not the answer. For most lowest-paid workers only pay tax at 20p; they never make it into the basic rate band. If he wants a tax cut to make a difference to his benefit figures he should look at cutting the 20p introductory rate. Not only would it reach more of the low-paid, it is also far more cost-effective than cutting the basic rate. Because the introductory band is narrow (£3,200) relative to the basic rate, you could use the same amount of money to generate a much bigger rate cut.

For the same price as 1p off the basic rate (£3bn), you could cut 5p off the introductory rate and bring it

Government policies since 1992 have added to lousy incentives to find work

down to 15p. We have a realistic possibility of achieving a 10p introductory rate after the next two Budgets.

Of course tax cuts alone aren't enough. For those on means-tested benefits such as Family Credit or Housing Benefit would lose most of this tax give-away in withdrawn benefits – unless withdrawal rates are lowered in line with the tax cuts over the £3,200 band range. Thus the marginal tax rates and the marginal benefit withdrawal rate can be cut, while take-home pay rises. This could create substantial improvements in work incentives without dragging more people into Family Credit.

Tax cuts are no panacea to end the growth of benefit dependence. However, combined with other initiatives currently being tried out by Peter Lilley at the DSS maybe, just maybe, Britain can get more for its tax cuts than a feel-good factor in the opinion polls. So, Ken, if you are going to cut taxes, do the right thing – cut the 20p rate, give tax cuts to everyone and help prise open the unemployment trap.

Paul Gregg and Jonathan Wadsworth are researchers at the Centre of Economic Performance at the London School of Economics.

by Tony Reeve and Steve Way

Generation Why



The sins of admission

One of the great outle's for creative writing is about to be denied to the nation's 17-year-olds and their parents.

University vice-chancellors are planning to allow sixth formers to fill out their UCAS forms after A-levels, rather than months before. In a hyperactive fortnight between August and September they will offer places based on their real, rather than predicted, A-level grades.

But since when was dealing in realities part of filling out a university application form? A UCAS form should be a heady mixture of predicted grades and imagined lives.

Children who believed they had no flair for creative writing discovered untapped sources of fictional inspiration. Parents who had brought up their offspring to have regard for veracity and fair play reconciled themselves to being economical with the truth or having to keep an underwolf for the next three years.

I long for a national study by the British Psychological Society of one year's UCAS forms as it could tell us so much about 17-year-olds in Britain: little about their lives, but tons about their creative abilities. Rarely can so many people have spent so much time and effort writing about non-existent achievements, interests and nobility of character for the annual autumnal sport of pulling the wool over the eyes of what is enduringly the last bastion of innocence, naivety and gullibility remaining in Britain – university admissions offices.

May I help admissions tutors, those guileless men and women, by offering my services as translator for those enigmatic, extra-curricular phrases on the forms now pouring into their offices?

I am gregarious = I have sex quite often.

I am an avid reader = I don't read.

I play the violin = my mum made me have lessons when I was 11.

I play football = ditto my dad.

The whole thing is a charade, because 17-year-olds simply don't have the breadth of interest that universities so confidently expect. They are too busy taking exams, and too busy being 17. That means listening to records, going to parties, the pub, the cinema and the shops – passive, trivial and unpolitical activities that would turn an admission officer's stomach.

As a student a decade later, I marched on a demo from that same university which now harbours the anti-milk monitor reactionaries, to protest against the ending of school milk to an entire year group also demanded precocious leadership skills. And, what is more, the experience politicised me.

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business

INDEPENDENT • Friday 17 November 1995

BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2530 fax 0171-293 2098

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THE INVESTMENT COLUMN
Edited by Magnus Grimond

Beware the Offer PowerGen can't refuse

Shares in PowerGen have underperformed the market since September's announcement that it was in talks to buy Midland Electricity. Confirmation that the £1.95bn takeover will go ahead has underscored investors' fears that winning the bid would expose PowerGen to more flak from Ofgem, the regulator, and the politicians.

Thus far, PowerGen has done well out of electricity deregulation, as yesterday's interim profits demonstrate. Pre-tax profits jumped 13 per cent to £133m in the six months to 1 October, but the surprise came in a half-way dividend raised 30 per cent to 6.5p. The largesse was possible because the company bought back 7.6 per cent of its shares at the government sell-off in March, which meant the cost of the interim payout rose only 18 per cent.

The medium-term plan is to lower dividend cover from last year's level of over three times to 2.5-2.7 times. But there are doubts about whether PowerGen will maintain the same level of generosity at the year-end. Although the shares rose 1.3p to 568p on yesterday's dividend news, longer-

term the realities of PowerGen's position will determine the price.

The case for buying Midlands rests in large part on its capacity to secure a market for a substantial part of PowerGen's output and to give access to billing, marketing and customer service expertise. The goal is to create a fully integrated electricity company better equipped to compete when the market is fully deregulated in 1998 and the lucrative supply contracts with the regional electricity companies end.

The problem is that any benefits from the Midlands customer base will not be felt in the short term. By 1998, only 16 per cent of PowerGen's expected output will not be tied up in long-term contracts with other RECs and so available to Midlands.

In the meantime, by acquiring Midlands, PowerGen will have subjected an estimated quarter of its profits to regulation by Ofgem and the possibility of a Labour government imposing tighter price or profit controls. It is also facing a continued loss of market share, which will be exacerbated by yesterday's completion of the forced

sell-off of two power stations to Eastern, and a possible fall in the price at which electricity is traded.

Long-term, PowerGen may or may not make a go of new activities ranging from overseas power generation to gas distribution. But short-term sentiment will be dominated by whether it gets government clearance to acquire Midlands. Profits of £590m this year would put the shares, up 13p at 568p, on a prospective multiple of only 10. Not expensive, but only weakly supported by a forward yield of 4 per cent.

The problem is that any benefits from the Midlands customer base will not be felt in the short term. By 1998, only 16 per cent of PowerGen's expected output will not be tied up in long-term contracts with other RECs and so available to Midlands.

Sparkling results from Capital Radio have put UK commercial radio solidly in the media spotlight – and with good reason. Radio has doubled its share of national advertising to about 4 per cent in only three years, and has room to grow. Capital, one of the largest and best-managed radio companies, is taking full advantage, reporting pre-

tax profits of £26.5m in the year to September, up 48 per cent.

While it is unlikely to repeat that performance in 1996, particularly since some of the growth came from the well-timed acquisition last year of Southero Radio, Capital is expected to be able to generate 20 per cent annual profit rises this year and next.

More than earlier this year about the state of the advertising market sent the shares drifting lower, to about the 440p mark, where they have been treading water. But the 15p rise yesterday, on the back of the profits announcement, suggest doubts have been overcome for now.

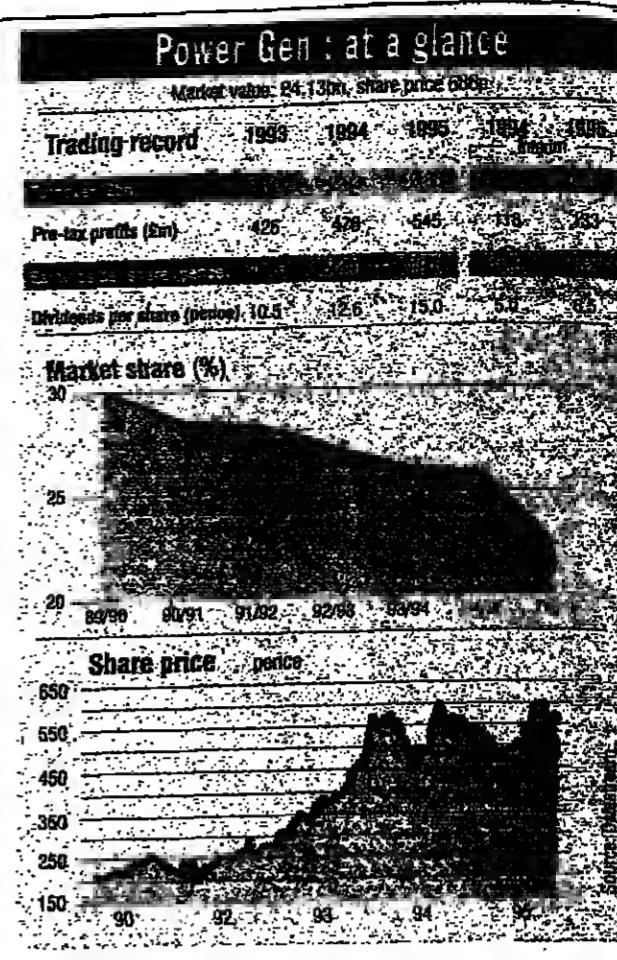
There are still a few concerns about what the company will do with its £20m in cash, and analysts have been pressing for a firmer statement of strategy from Richard Eyre and his team. Yesterday they got it: plans to bid for a commercial radio licence in Yorkshire, among other franchises, expansion into multimedia partnerships with overseas radio companies and, of all things, a "radio-themed" restaurant. Of the four, only the vague "multi-

media" push looks suspect. For a radio company to think about investing in on-line services seems a bit of a stretch, given how many big media companies are already sniffing around this potentially cash-draining sector.

But the restaurant scheme looks a bright idea. The company is moving into offices in Leicester Square, and plans to convert an existing ground-floor restaurant into a Planet Hollywood-style hang-out, with radio memorabilia on the walls.

Plans to discuss overseas opportunities with local partners likewise look promising. The company has assured shareholders and analysts it does not intend to spend freely in markets it doesn't know. But it feels, rightly, that its sales and management skills are exportable, given the right strategic partners and provided it sticks to deregulated, commercial markets.

Core radio remains the focus, however. And with pre-tax profits likely to grow to £32m this year (30p a share) and £38m next (38p), the shares look reasonably good value at 11 times next year's earnings.



Simon Pinecombe
CITY DIARY

Hewlett ready to rejoice in half-year ritual

Only hours to go for the happy hand that is the Hewlett-Packard workforce. Today Lew Platt, the computer giant's president, chief executive officer and chairman, announces the six-monthly profit share. This is not a figure to be sneezed at. Last summer every employee worldwide collected 11 per cent of basic salary.

But the announcement itself has developed into something of a ritual. Mr Platt likes to deliver the good news personally and simultaneously to all corners of Hewlett's global empire.

At 0800 hours in California (1600 hours in the UK) the international workforce will don soldering irons and gather round the tannoy expectantly. The inevitable bit of static will be followed by the unmistakable voice of the illustrious leader (only the third in the company's history) as he announces the figure. This will then be followed by a traditional and resounding "Hurrah", and the money will be in the pay packets two weeks later.

Oh, by the way, Hewlett has never announced a quarterly loss since it was founded in 1939. Funny that.

Airbus Industrie has hit back in decisive fashion over the loss of the £88m Singapore Airlines order to Boeing. The European consortium has finally succeeded in suppressing further publication of Karl Sabbagh's *21st Century Jet*, which chronicles the development of the Boeing 777. You will recall that Singaporeans ordered 77 of the offending planes this week.

"We are required to recall all copies of the book," says Macmillan, co-publishers of the book with Channel Four. "Airbus Industrie has complained."

A quick leaf-through reveals nothing too sinister. But a hint of what is to come can be gleaned from page 12 where Mr Sabbagh writes: "Before libel lawyers from all seven continents descend on the publisher of this book it is worth pointing out that ..."

Cocking a snook at the anti-nuclear movement, Barclays Bank attempts to take the public relations pressure off Shell by embracing the Beaujolais Nouveau. Various branches were offering free tastings yesterday, with Holborn branch even hanging out French flags. In the City, Bills Brothers reported that the light and fruity number, "which shows no excess of the yeast that has marred some of the previous vintages", had sold 500 bottles by 10am at 24.20 each plus VAT. We shall have to see how it goes down in Tahiti.

Never reluctant to issue guidelines where none are needed the Americans have published the definitive guide on how to look acceptably scruffy at work.

A booklet from Hagar Clothing, a brand new company that's been around for years (sic), describes the finer points of dressing down: the wearing of more casual clothes than tradition dictates.

"Like the information highway and political correctness, dressing down is off and running before anyone's figured how it works," warns Hagar. "Though 75 per cent



Fashion scene: The art of dressing down at the office

of Fortune 500 companies now have some sort of dressing down policy, they rarely spell it out in a memo. It's almost as if they are testing employees to see who will screw up."

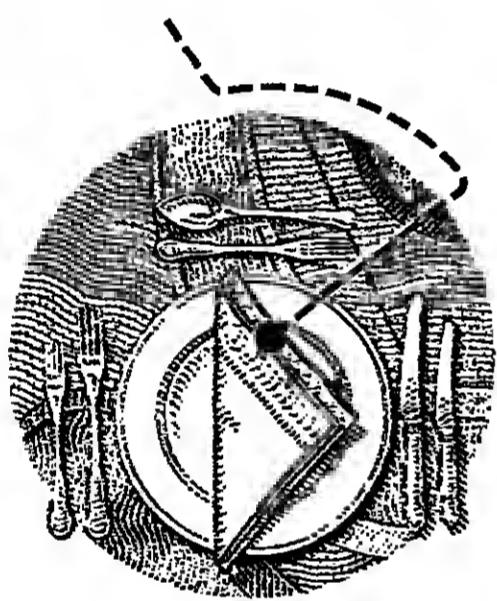
Should you feel the sudden urge to dress down, follow the code. Instead of traditional, standard colour silk ties, switch to cotton and knit fabrics. "Show appreciation for a holiday or display your favourite dog."

Come to think of it, there was a polo neck seen at SBC Warburg recently.

Hectic trading at Credit Lyonnais where some entrepreneur has been trying to shift a load of rugs in the run-up to Christmas. Telephone callers to the bank could even hear prices being quoted.

Improving business performance. A few helpful ideas from Mercury.

A business lunch.



1. Cut out the business lunch.

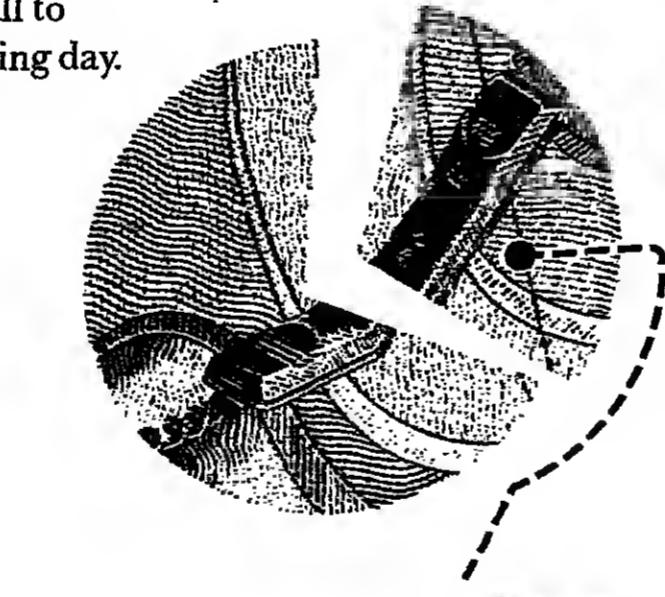
- Enables employees to walk in a straight line during the afternoon.
- Significantly reduces the chances of being asked a difficult business question whilst struggling with a lobster claw.
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- Lunch is a security risk. Remember, walls have ears, and tables have legs.

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COMPANY RESULTS				
	Turnover £	Pre-Tax £	EPS	Dividend
Capital Radio (F)	6.7m (51.7m)	39.3m (22.1m)	24p (16.2p)	10.25p (7.25p)
Cable and Wireless (D)	2.71m (2.54m)	81.5m (54.7m)	19.6p (11.1p)	3.08p (2.33p)
CE Hatch (I)	62.0m (51.4m)	10.3m (6.36m)	-3.3p (5.2p)	3p (5p)
Plymouth & Seaford (I)	7.0m (6.0m)	4.9m (5.39m)	2.45p (2.0p)	3.88p (3.51p)
PowerGen (I)	1.108m (1.148m)	13.2m (11.12m)	13.4p (10.4p)	6.5p (5p)
Sensis Group (I)	24.8m (20.5m)	27.7m (23.0m)	7.8p (6.25p)	1.78p (1.7p)
SNS Group (I)	6.75m (5.53m)	4.82m (2.47m)	7.1p (3.8p)	0.75p (0.5p)
Southwest (I)	1.32m (1.13m)	1.97m (1.41m)	8.48p (6.14p)	1.75p (1.35p)
Stringent (I)	1.98m (1.95m)	1.45m (1.56m)	2.13p (3.90p)	1.42p (1.25p)
Telegraph (O)	182m (170m)	25.6m (23.9m)	5.8p (4.2p)	1.2p (1p)
Thames Brothers (I)	2.71m (2.45m)	3.19m (2.13m)	5.8p (4.2p)	1.2p (1p)

(F) - Final (I) - Interim (M) - 12 months

Lord Young, who has announced he is to quit the telecoms giant, will leave an air of lost opportunity at its Mercury offshoot. **Paul Vallely** reports

In my wallet I carry two symbols of corporate failure. They are my Mercury phonecards - £10 and £2 respectively. Mr Cholmondeley-Warner, Harry Enfield's moustachioed cartoon icon of post-war propriety, would be impressed. No one else would be. I carry them like talismans. They seem to work. For less and less do I encounter those strange blue creatures that pass for Mercury pay phones.

So whatever happened to Mercury? Eleven years ago the company was apparently given a licence to print money when it was granted exclusive rights to challenge the monopoly of British Telecom. Yet in the decade that has passed it seems hardly to have dented the market. Last year it was forced to shut down the call boxes, lay off 2,500 staff and restructure the business at a cost of £12m. Then last week the man responsible for the new strategy, Duncan Lewis, abruptly resigned himself, with no job to go to.

Mercury is now on to its fifth chief executive in six years. So, an impossible job, or is it chairman, Lord Young of Graffham - Margaret Thatcher's one-time favourite minister - just impossible to work with?

Things were looking good for Mercury in 1990, when Lord Young took over as chairman of its parent company, Cable & Wireless. Not long before, as Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, he had awarded a mobile telephony licence to Mercury. His appointment seemed to make sense for C&W, the telecom giant that was once the communications system of empire and which spans 50 countries.

Lord Young went with a can-do reputation. "Everyone else brings me problems," David

Five years of crossed lines at Cable & Wireless

brings me solutions," Mrs Thatcher memorably said of the man she brought unselected into the Cabinet, enabling him for the purpose, after being impressed with his performance as head of the Manpower Services Commission.

But not everyone was pleased. Gordon Owen, the chief executive, had hoped for the top job himself. Mr Owen, a capable old C&W hand who was autocratic, energetic and obstinate, began a power struggle that lasted 10 months. "He made no effort to work with the new chairman," one insider said. "The end was inevitable."

One day a friend walked into Mr Owen's office and announced that a headhunter had offered him Mr Owen's job. After 37 years at C&W he went to receive his dismissal with the words: "Right, you've taken my whole life; what's the deal?" The deal was almost £1m and this week, with Mercury in chaos, Mr Owen was maintaining a satisfied silence; he is chairman of the National Grid's telecom outfit, Eneris, which is using electricity pylons to support fibre-optic wires to become the third big player in a rapidly expanding telecom market that now has almost 60 firms holding licences.

With Mr Owen gone, Lord Young became an executive chairman. He was hands-on about new business development and as an international

front-man but also "dabbling and dipping in and out elsewhere," in the words of one former senior C&W executive, "in a manner which people working for him find difficult".

It was a pattern familiar to senior civil servants at the DTI who, in an unpublished survey, showed they didn't like him. Difficult, abrasive, bullying, shallow, slightly flashy, PR-driven were among the verdicts. Lord Young was shrinking their department but many outsiders shared the view. "Slick and strangely lack-

ing in presence," one said. "He may be the man with solutions, but they don't last," another said. "He has a short attention span," is the judgement of one who has worked closely with him. "He has big ideas but doesn't have the concentration to carry them through."

"It was reasonable enough to change Owen," says James Dodd, telecom analyst with Kleinwort Benson. "He and Lord Sharp, the former chairman, had done a good job but something new was needed to take the company into a new era. You wanted a blue-chip corporate manager." Lord Young

found one in James Ross, who came from BT as C&W chief executive - "a calm, straight guy who works for consensus," colleagues said. But he has found no one to stay at Mercury.

His first chief executive there, Peter van Cuylenburg, decided when BT got its act together Mercury was going to need a more specific strategy to compete. "It couldn't be a mini-BT across the board," one former C&W executive said. The man inevitably known as PVC immersed the company in a com-

pany for the company," a Young loyalist said, "but he appeared to be less effective on the admin and finance side. His budget caused a crisis of confidence." Mr Harris was moved sideways last year after disappointing results - profits went down by 17 per cent.

In came Duncan Lewis, an ex-BT man "very calm, assured, thinking everything through, putting in place a strategy," said one C&W old hand. The strategy was to wield the axe on payphones, jobs and an awful lot else and concentrate on corporate customers who prefer to deal with one telecom outfit for all their needs. Nine months on, the City began to talk about how he had "turned the company round with some hard decisions". Now, out of the blue, Mr Lewis goes too, to be replaced by Peter Howell-Davies, Cable & Wireless man and boy.

So is it an impossible job? Some analysts say yes. BT was left too dominant, they argue, pointing to its huge powers of information and the breadth of its customer base. And BT was allowed to depress prices where Mercury competed and raise them where it had a monopoly - something Mr Lewis was complaining about in an impassioned City speech the day before his summary resignation.

But other analysts believe that Mercury has just loused up - under-estimating BT's economies of scale, over-estimating



Big ideas, but ... Lord Young came with a 'can-do' reputation, though his hands-on approach grated on some

mating its own return on investment and making a number of key errors. They point to its precipitate move to a coinless market in payphones and its policy of free off-peak calls in its mobile phone system. "Free calls in the evening," one analyst said, "secured them quick penetration of the market but people bought phones and only used them for free in the evening."

In the City people asked if the 63-year-old Lord Young was worth his total remuneration package of almost £1m a year. "Mercury was one of the most spectacular investments of the Eighties under Lord Sharp," says James Dodd at Kleinwort Benson. "But it has underperformed dramatically for the past two years. It doesn't reflect well on Lord Young. In the end, a chairman only has one job - to appoint a successful team - that's the only thing he has to do."

Much will turn on the outcome of Mercury's recent £825m investment in the German telecom company Vodafone. "It is an enormous gamble when the political and regulatory structure of the German market is undecided," another analyst said. "Mercury has gone critical." It is not the only key strategic decision to be made. One of Duncan Lewis's concerns was that C&W - on whose main board he was offered a place just before he left - is currently trying to do too much. A "federation" is how Lord Young likes to describe it: a "hotch-potch" is Mr Lewis's view.

"There is no doubt that C&W is a house divided," one international analyst said. "It is a schizophrenic organisation - a monopoly operator in many countries and yet the market entrant in others."

Sir Alastair believes that to cope with this the PFI requires far stronger, better capitalised bidders than the ad hoc consortia of construction and IT companies, consultants and medical or prison equipment firms at present involved. ICI, BP, Shell and other giants used to owning as well as managing big projects might make a much better fist of PFI contracts, but sadly are not interested.

Sir Alastair's harshest complaint is reserved for the way the Government has been implementing the PFI. Civil servants, he believes, have yet to come to terms with a cultural change that requires them to understand and price commercial risks, and oversee services to be provided by the private sector over as long as 25 years.

The Treasury claims that as well as the effort from the top to persuade departments to push the PFI forward, it has begun a drive to retrain civil servants at all levels in spending departments in the new disciplines. But the numbers of people are small and the pace so slow it is hard to believe -

given that the task is to change the working method of entire divisions of the civil service - that this will make a dramatic difference within the timescale of the public spending cuts.

A deeper problem may be the Treasury itself. An organisation whose role in life is saying yes or no to other people's spending plans is not best suited to a crash programme of installing an entrepreneurial culture in the rest of Whitehall.

By building up expectations, for political reasons, of how fast the PFI can deliver work to companies, the Government is discrediting a worthwhile exercise before it is fully operational.

Brutal push that could discredit private finance for public projects

If there was one really serious grumble about the Government at the CBI conference this week it was the failure of the Private Finance Initiative to deliver the grand promises made for it by ministers.

The PFI, a centrepiece of Treasury policy that has the full backing of the Prime Minister, is meant to draw private money into projects that in the past have been funded directly by the taxpayer. But much of business now sees the whole idea as no more than a fig-leaf to cover the nakedness of the Government's commitment to spending on roads, railways, hospitals, education and prisons.

The consensus in Birmingham was that it was a good idea gone horribly wrong. The public spending cuts are going ahead, but the PFI is bogged down in bureaucracy and incapable of filling the gap.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, will promise yet another expansion of the PFI in the Budget but you do not have to be a wizard at arithmetic to see how easily this can camouflage public

INDUSTRY VIEW
PETER RODGERS

when the number of contracts let was embarrassingly thin. This summer, the Prime Minister got stroppy about it and insisted that the whole Cabinet - which had not been uniformly enthusiastic - came into line. That resulted in the boot being put into permanent secretaries and a sharp increase in the number of deals clinched.

Even now, only £1.3bn of the £5bn contracts the Chancellor said a year ago would be let by next March have actually been agreed. That £5bn figure includes the £2.3bn Channel tunnel rail link, which does appear to be grinding slowly towards an agreement, but probably because of a rapid increase in the bribe - sorry, contribution - from the public purse.

The campaign is at least in part a reaction to foot-dragging throughout Whitehall during the first 18 months of the PFI.

CLASSIFIED

Legal Notices

Legal Notices

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT

IN THE MATTER OF PROVIDENT MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE ASSOCIATION
and -
IN THE MATTER OF GENERAL ACCIDENT LINKED LIFE ASSURANCE LIMITED
and -

IN THE MATTER OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT 1982
Notice is hereby given that a Petition ("the Petition") was on the 4th October, 1995 presented to Her Majesty's High Court by the above-named Provident Mutual Life Assurance Association ("Provident Mutual") for the sanction of the Court under Part I of Schedule 2C to the Insurance Companies Act 1982 (the "Act") to a Scheme (the "Scheme") providing for the transfer to General Accident Linked Life Assurance Limited ("GA Linked Life") of the whole of the long term business (as defined by Section 1(1) of the said Act) of Provident Mutual and for orders making ancillary provisions in connection with the said transfer under paragraph 5 of Schedule 2C to the Act.

Copies of the Petition (concerning the Scheme) and a Report by an Independent Actuary pursuant to paragraph 2 of Schedule 2C to the Act can be inspected at each of the offices specified in the Schedule hereto during normal business hours for a period of 21 days from the publication of this notice.

The Petition is directed to be heard before the Judge at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LJ on the 20th December, 1995. Any person (including any employee of Provident Mutual or GA Linked Life) who claims that he or she would be adversely affected by the Scheme may apply to the court of a court of law to restrain or restrain by Counsel. Any person who intends to oppose and any policyholder of Provident Mutual or GA Linked Life who objects from the Scheme but does not intend to appear should give notice to writing of such intention or dissent and of the reasons therefor to the Solicitors named below.

Copies of the documents referred to above will be furnished by such Solicitors to any person requiring them prior to the making of an Order sanctioning the Scheme on payment of £11.40 (being a charge of 10p for each page).

Dated this 16th November, 1995
HERBERT SMITH, Exchange House, Princes Street, London EC2A 3HS. Ref: 146/350 Solicitors for Provident Mutual

THE SCHEDULE

Offices of Provident Mutual	
HEAD OFFICE	56 Hills Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 2ST
REGISTERED OFFICE BIRMINGHAM	25-31 Moorgate, London EC2R 6SA
BRIGHTON	Stokes House, 17-25 College Square, East Belfast BT1 6DE
CROYDON	London House, Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8PE
GLASGOW	Suite 3, 3rd Floor, Glendale, 190 Corporation Street, Birmingham B4 6QD
HARROW	36 Frederick Place, Brighton BN1 4AE
LONDON CITY	1-4 Portland Square, Bristol BS2 0RA
LONDON West End	Crescent International Business Centre, Temple Way, Bristol B1 6EZ
MAIDSTONE	Landsdowne House, 17 Lansdowne Road, Croydon CR0 2BX
SWANSEA	Unit 1, Buchanan Court, Buchanan Business Park, Cumbernauld Road, Scapa, Glasgow G33 6HX
SWANSEA	93 West George Street, Glasgow G2 1PB
SWANSEA	1-3 Tyburn Lane, Harrow HA1 3AP
SWANSEA	Jones's Well, Hanover Walk, Park Lane, Leeds LS1 2AB
SWANSEA	30 Park Place, Leeds LS1 2SP
SWANSEA	Garden House, 18 Finsbury Circus, London EC2M 7LX
SWANSEA	Victoria Station House, 191 Victoria Street, London SW1E 5NE
SWANSEA	6-8 Albion Place, Salford Quays, Manchester M5 5DV
MANCHESTER	Suite 16, Manchester International Office Centre, Syndicate Road, Worsley, Manchester M22 5WB
NEWCASTLE	Sure House, 83-85 Mosley Street, Manchester M2 3LG
NORTHAMPTON	2nd Floor, Kelham House, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 1YE
NORWICH	29 St. Katherine's Street, Norwich NN1 2QZ
NOTTINGHAM	Westgate House, 14-18 Westgate, Norwich NR1 1LR
READING	4-8 Regent Street, Nottingham NG1 1BQ
RICHMOND	St. Giles House, 25 King's Road, Reading RG1 3AR
SITTINGBOURNE	York House, 50 Western Road, Romford RM1 3LP
SOUTHAMPTON	Grosvenor House, Cumbernauld Place, Southampton SO1 2BD
STEVENAGE	Cromwell House, 142 High Street, Stevenage, Herts SG1 3DB
YORK	Offices of GA Linked Life Group companies 2 Rougier Street, York YO1 1HR
PERTH	Pitlochry, Perth, Scotland PH2 0NH
CARDIFF	General Buildings, 31-33 Newport Road, Cardiff CF2 1TQ
SWANSEA	General Buildings, 163 St. Helen's Road, Swansea SA1 4DJ

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market report/shares

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SEAQ VOLUME
731.3m shares,
32,729 bargains

Gilt's Index
94.92 + 0.59

Insurers sparkle as the Footsie smashes 3,600 barrier

Blue chips soared to a new peak with the FT-SE 100 index crashing through the 3,600 barrier for the first time.

Growing hopes of an interest rate cut, the sharp inflation improvement and increasing confidence about the Budget created the excitement.

And, seemingly inevitably, New York made a significant contribution. Yet more records as the Dow Jones Average marched remorselessly towards 5,000 points inspired London, although the gap between the two markets yawned even wider.

The FT-SE 100 index ended 39.4 points higher at 3,610.8 with double-figure gains spread through the top 100 shares. Government stocks offered support with the benchmark gilt due 2017, over £1 higher.

It is, however, very much a blue-chip share party. Although the index measuring the

next 250 shares was sharply higher it is short of its record.

The two indices clearly demonstrate how the current party has divided the stock market, with blue chips enjoying a boom but others having a much more subdued time.

The FT-SE 250 index, at 3,960.8, is nearly 200 points below its peak, established when blue chips and second-liners were advancing in unison in February last year. Then the two indices reached record levels together.

Insurances were the outstanding performers with Legal & General's decision to shake up its long-term funds sparking the enthusiasm.

The move, which should increase dividend growth, is likely to be followed by other insurers. L&G jumped 22p to 667p and Prudential Corporation, the day's best-performing blue chip, 20p to 415p.

Sunlife improved 14p to

371p and Royal Insurance 13p to 380p.

The market was quick to take the view that the L&G move was not unrelated to the bid speculation that has swirled around the group. There is a strong belief the insurers are due for bid action. If not L&G, the market believes Royal will be the target.

It is surprising the industry has managed to avoid the flood of financial bids that engulfed merchant and retail banks and fund managers.

Zeneca continued to suffer the torment of takeover rumours, surging to another peak. Roche and Ciba-Cibgo, the Swiss duo, were replaced

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter
of the year

as bid favourites by another Swiss group, Sandoz. It has, it was said, signalled it intended to make a big buy although a few months ago it seemed to rule itself out of the Zeneca running. Zeneca finished up 22p at 1,313p. Glaxo Wellcome gained 23p to 888p. It intends to appeal against last week's legal judgment that the Inland Revenue can pursue the group for back tax.

The scent of lower interest rates captivated builders and retailers. Barratt Developments, expecting to "comfortably" exceed last year's house sales, rose 5p to 218p and Beazer 4p to 167p.

BICC gained 12p to 365p, a

two-day advance of 21p. The shares have been bumping along around their year's low and there are suggestions the group is vulnerable to a lurking predator.

Among stores, Storehouse, figures next week, rose 9p to 320p and Kingfisher 14p to 514p. Shell, up 11p to 769p, was spurred by an investment presentation, with its Nigerian involvement again brushed aside.

United News & Media, awaiting disposal developments, jumped 31p to 570p. Other newspaper shares were firm ahead of the *Times* price increase. Mirror Group Newspapers gained 13p to 180p and the *Telegraph* 10p to 428p.

Cowie, the garage and leasing group, motored on the back of Merrill Lynch support, advancing 16p to 292p. Rolls-Royce, with another contract under its belt, topped its 1987 flotation price, rising 3p to

170.5p. Figures left Cable and Wireless 2p higher at 425p.

Inchcape weakened again on currency worries off 11p at 325p; Vodafone remained under pressure from cash-call worries, falling 3.5p to 252p, and BT brushed its year's low, falling 2p to 362.5p on competition worries.

Euro Disney fell 25p to 169p on further consideration of its modest profit and First Choice reported 10p off after rights take-up. Premier Land had to be content with a paltry 17.1 per cent rights response. The shares held at 42.5p.

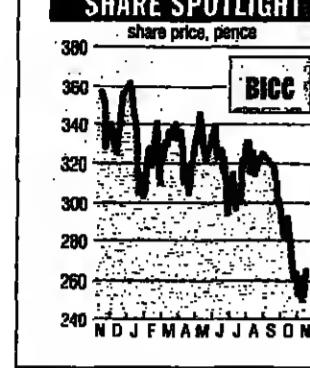
CE Health confirmed its computer flotation plans but fell 5p to 163p on figures. Unipart jumped 57p to 755p as the value of the US bid continued to increase.

A Beckman, the textile business, held at 59p. The move to take the company private at 60p a share was approved.

TAKING STOCK

The reshaping of Hartington as one of the new-style pub companies continues with Alastair Mowat, ex-Scottish & Newcastle, moving in as chief executive. In August Hartington, which had survived by running just one Isle of Wight hotel, took on the management of 210 former Scottish pubs. Trevor Hemmings, a director of the brewing giant, is a big shareholder. Other pub deals are expected. The shares held at 15.5p; they were 6p in August.

Cedardata, the supplier of financial accounting computer software, fell 4p to 172p. Gidon Shamir has resigned as a non-executive director and Greg Middleton, the stockbroker, placed his family's shareholding of 1 million shares with institutions at 167.5p. It came to market 18 months ago at 105p.



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FOOD MANUFACTURERS

FOOTWEAR

FOOTWEAR</h

Another episode of Morley Street

Richard Edmondson on the former champion returning from retirement

Retirement is often not what it seems to be. Pensioners who have been looking forward to empty days find that there are only so many pottering laps of the garden you can do, a limited number of times you can read J R Hartley's tome on fly-fishing.

This happens to thoroughbreds taken from the front line as well and one of racing's more convincing adages is that old horses do not die, they stand in a field and get thoroughly brossed off.

One such animal with medals right across his chest climbs back into the tenebrous today. Morley Street, the 1992 Champion Hurdler, returns at Ascot following 432 days of increasingly annoying inactivity.

"Like so many who have been retired he began to show that he actually enjoyed being in training after being taken out of it," Toby Balding, the gelding's trainer, said yesterday.

"He was getting very above himself away from the yard. He was very well and he was sparkling and showing that he wanted to get on and do some work. He was in such good nick but there was nothing for him to do so it seemed a shame not to bring him back."

Home for Morley Street since September last year has been in East Sussex with his owner, Michael Jackson, who had tired of seeing his old soldier become a counterfeiter of the

brilliant performer he once was. After the Corsi Steppi di Merano (Italian Champion Hurdle) 14 months ago, when Morley Street was a creditable fourth, Jackson rolled the credits. "Michael said then he was not enjoying not seeing his horse win if you like and we took the decision to lay him off, to retire him," Balding said.

Those behind Morley Street have always felt protective about the horse as he has been prone to breaking blood vessels.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Take The Buckskin
(Aintree 1.15)
NB: Ifeevee
(Sedgefield 2.30)

Balding has treated the chestnut with Lasix and natural potions that have included just about everything but the recipe from the Macheth witches' cookery book. "We've had him under review for a long time in view of the problems he's had throughout his career," the trainer said. He gives so much you don't want to overfeed him."

Thus Morley Street, at the age of 11, arrives in Berkshire today for combat with Oh So Risky, who goes chasing after this afternoon's Coopers & Ly-

No dope found in Trigger

The official analysis of samples taken from the Melbourne Cup flop Double Trigger have found no prohibited substances in the favourite's system.

"They said he is clear and I am quite happy," Mark Johnston, the four-year-old's trainer, said after arriving back in Middleham yesterday from Aintree.

An irregularity had been reported in Double Trigger's pre-race blood test - which almost prevented his taking part - and it was also shown in the post-race urine sample. But it was found to be caused by a metabolite of a substance which is a naturally occurring constituent of some feedstuffs and was subsequently found in analysis of the feed given to Double Trigger before the race.

Johnston said: "It is still a mystery why he ran like he did [17th of 20] and we will have to sit down and have a bit of a think about it."

Klairon holds back from Viking attack

Klairon Davis had much the better of the argument with Merry Gale in the contest between two of Ireland's top chasers at Tipperary yesterday.

The winner, who had taken last season's Arkle Trophy at the Cheltenham Festival, had the two-mile trip and the good ground in his favour and picked off Merry Gale (11-6) when Jim Dreaper's Aintree winner made a mistake two out when being reeled in by the 9-1 favourite.

"Klairon Davis did that well, but he will be having a light programme because there are not

many suitable races over this trip in this country. Next spring will be time enough to take on Viking Flagship," Arthur Moore, his trainer, said.

Richard Dunwoody, on the runner-up, reported: "Merry Gale did his job well, but he missed the second last then slipped taking off at the last."

Dreaper described the race as a means to an end. "Merry Gale needed that and goes now to Punchestown on Saturday week before running either at Leopardstown or in the King George at Christmas."

Riders lose appeal

Fitzgerald, who will miss the ride on Rough Quest in the Hennessy, defended his actions. "If you're in behind the leaders, as I was on Rainbow Walk, you could not see the arrows which were pointing to the right route," he said. "In future I will pull if I'm not sure - and where will that get me?"

AINTREE
HYPERION
1.15 Take The Buckskin 1.50 Frontier Flight
2.20 Clay County 2.50 Jawani 3.20 Spanish Light 3.50 Rachael's Dawn

The five jump jockeys who had appealed against seven-day bans for taking the wrong course at Taunton last week had their plea turned down yesterday.

The riders - Tony McCoy, Guy Lewis, Tom Dascombe, Mark Richards and Mick Fitzgerald - had their deposits of £240 returned.

SIS
HYPERION
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: None. LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Bremont (1.15) & Explore Mondial (1.60) have sent 346 miles by T Dyer from Invergordon, Tayside.

1.15 LEITHS EVENTS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 3m 110yds

1. 2-0212 KALASHNIK (USA) (7) Mj 5 D 4.15 3-1 Cawne (C) 5-1 McEvoy
2. 0P5042 DALMADEN (GB) (8) Mj 5 D 11.0 3-1 L. McEvoy
3. 233224 TAKE THE RACE (GB) (7) Mj 5 D 11.0 3-1 D. McEvoy
4. 6 BEIJING (T) D 4.10 3-1 D. McEvoy

BETTING: 8-11 Fancier, 9-4 Taker, 8-1 Dismount, 10-1 Bremont

1.15 EATONS CATERING CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS F) £5,000 added 2m 110yds

1. 215221 FRONTIER FLIGHT (9) Mj 5 Sodell 5 11.12 (7m) 3-1 E. Bushard
2. 3P0152 DODGY DANCER (GB) (10) Mj 5 D 11.10 3-1 T. Dascombe
3. 011-F43 TASHWEET (GB) (9) Mj 5 D 11.10 3-1 E. Bushard
4. 033-632 EXPLORE MONDIAL (1.15) (7) Mj 5 D 11.0 3-1 E. Bushard
5. 028-225 DON TUCINO (GB) (7) Mj 5 D 10

BETTING: even Kalsked, 7-4 Take The Buckskin, 8-1 Dismount, 10-1 Bremont

1.15 RACEHORSES NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS F) £5,000 added 2m 110yds

1. 315221 FRONTIER FLIGHT (9) Mj 5 Sodell 5 11.12 (7m) 3-1 E. Bushard
2. 3P0152 DODGY DANCER (GB) (10) Mj 5 D 11.10 3-1 T. Dascombe
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BETTING: even Kalsked, 7-4 Take The Buckskin, 8-1 Dismount, 10-1 Bremont

3.20 BATEMAN CATERING NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 3m 110yds

1. 121141 JAWANI (GB) (9) D 11.0 3-1 L. Wyer
2. 12922- GRACE CARD (GB) (9) D 11.0 3-1 J. O'Brien
3. 13-112 PINE MINER (GB) (9) Mj 5 D 11.0 3-1 R. Gandy
4. 056-323 TASHWEET (GB) (9) Mj 5 D 11.0 3-1 L. Wyer

BETTING: 8-11 Fancier, 9-4 Taker, 8-1 Dismount, 10-1 Bremont

3.50 CHARTWELLS MARES INTERMEDIATE NH FLAT RACE (CLASS H) £2,500 added 2m 110yds

1. 315221 RACHEL'S DAWN (GB) (9) Mj 5 D 11.12 (7m) 3-1 E. Bushard
2. 6-MR HARVEL LAD (MR R Nutall) 5-1 A. Evans
3. 2-0212 SHANNON DAIRY (GB) (9) Mj 5 D 11.12 (7m) 3-1 E. Bushard
4. 011-F43 TASHWEET (GB) (9) Mj 5 D 11.10 3-1 E. Bushard
5. 028-225 EXPLORE MONDIAL (1.15) (7) Mj 5 D 11.0 3-1 E. Bushard

BETTING: even Kalsked, 6-4 La Belle Villa, 7-1 R. Baile, 8-1 P. Olympe, 20-1 Martha Biscuit

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2.

sport

England signal the end of hoof and chase

Glenn Moore on a promising display by Terry Venables' patient performers

Roy Hodgson was generous in defeat. "If English football is as bad as all the inquests keep saying it is, it must be a remarkable performance by the coaching staff to get the national team playing like that." So said the Swiss manager after his team had lost 3-1 to England at Wembley on Wednesday.

Hodgson meant that the English game was not that bad after all. Maybe not, but his comments are more accurate when taken at face value. English club results in Europe have been so consistently poor that there clearly is a lot wrong with their game.

It is partly due to technique, but it is also a question of knowledge and approach. The "remarkable achievement" of Terry Venables and his staff is that they have coached England players not to play the way they do at club level.

The message is getting through. Before Wednesday's match Tony Adams and David Platt both talked of the need for patience; during the game most of the team showed it. Teddy Sheringham's goal followed at least 15 passes involving every outfield player except Alan Shearer and Adams. Stuart Pearce and Paul Gascoigne were each involved three or more times as England patiently probed for an opening on the left while getting forward in numbers. They then switched the play and attacked from the right.

"I was pleased that, when we could not go forward, we did not try and force it and lose the ball," Venables said. "We brought the ball back out, moved them around and made space to get quality balls forward. We changed the play well."

Other chance-creating moves were similarly prolonged. At last the hoof-and-chase "direct-play" philosophy as espoused by Charles Hughes is being expunged from official policy (even if Hughes is still the FA's director of coaching and education).

To be fair to Hughes his philosophy may have worked 20 years ago, but defences are better organised now, teams defend deeper and in greater numbers and patience and cunning is usually required to break them down. There is, however, still a case for direct football of a different type - as Steve Stone showed with his aggressive running and preparedness

cross the ball. "He was first class," Venables said. "He looks like he has been there for years, he did so when he first came into the squad. He is a fighter, too, which is useful to have when things are not going well."

Stone's success contrasted with Steve McManaman's ineffectiveness. Tying him to a fixed role on the left, as appeared to happen, dramatically reduces his potency. He is too one-footed to go by defenders on the left wing with any consistency. Yet giving him a free role would affect England's defensive discipline and shape.

Unfortunately there are no obvious alternatives - the only English-born left-footed winger of international class is Ryan Giggs. Darren Anderton, is one possibility, though if he can regain fitness in time, for his game offers more than McManaman's.

"Can Anderton play on the left?" Venables was asked. "He can do so many things. He can play in a free role, in the centre, on the right or left. He has two good feet. He and Stone could play in the same team."

Between the wide players it is worth persevering with Jamie Redknapp and Paul Gascoigne.

The only reservation is Gascoigne's lack of tactical discipline. Venables noted: "At 3-1 up he left his position too often and isolated Robert [Lee]. I wanted him to boss the midfield and rely on the front four to get the third goal but he was up the left wing and... I don't know." Gascoigne, as ever, can still perplex and infuriate even the most understanding of managers. The hard-working Lee covered well for him on Wednesday, better than Redknapp would. However, Redknapp has a better touch and vision while Lee looks more of a squad player than a first-choice international.

Further forward, Sheringham's thoughtful performance causes as many problems as it solves. Peter Beardsley has more nous, Nick Barnby more pace and energy, yet Shearer seems happier with Sheringham than either. He is certainly happier playing in a partnership.

England next play Portugal, on 12 December. Venables has just one day - a Tuesday - to prepare for the match. It may not be long enough to switch from playing Premiership rush to international patience.



Ball winner: Alan Shearer appears happier with Sheringham sharing the striking role for England

Photograph: David Ashdown

Hair loss proving England's gain

Those who were surprised at Steve Stone's sudden and accomplished success in the England team clearly have less of a grasp of footballing heritage than Terry Venables. Stone's arrival marked a return to a tradition apparently lost under the management of Graham Taylor: the crucial role to be played in the national set-up by the midfield slap-head.

Football history is littered with the feats of the prematurely hair-free. Some, like Ralph Coates, Terry Hennessey, David Armstrong and the daddy of them all, Bobby Charlton, cheered the nation's heart both with their efforts on the field, and

the manner in which they fought so valiantly against the reality of hair loss. Coates, for instance, is remembered for the extraordinary manner in which he left not only full-backs trailing in his wake, but also a bloom of hair which he had earlier scraped over the top of his dome from more hirsute parts of his body in the unlikely hope we would all believe it grew out of his scalp, rather than his arm-pit.

Not that you can blame players like Coates for trying to disguise their problem. Even in these days when the fashion is for a number one crop, it is no easy life being a footballer bereft of barnet. Stone, re-

Jim White looks at the bald facts of footballers with nothing on top

member, is the same age as Jamie Redknapp, but it seems unlikely the acreage of his bare bounce adorns as many teenage bedroom walls as Redknapp's trendily teased locks. At every stadium he plays, the cries of derision will echo in his ears. That includes the City Ground. Even when fans attempt to cheer on the tonally challenged player on their own team, they can't help pointing

out his handicap ("Stevie Bould, Stevie Bould," chant Arsenal fans, "he ain't got no hair, but we don't care.")

Thus to succeed against these odds, the youthful baldie will develop nerves of steel and the determination of a soldier ant. The fear involved in stepping out at Wembley for the first time will be nothing to the suffering endured when being called "Buttock-head" during a League encounter with Middlesbrough. This extra edge developed by no-hairs has been recognised by other national teams. The Italian, for instance, have Lombardo, a role model for the thinning everywhere. And ar-

guably the best midfielder in the last World Cup was Letchkov of Bulgaria, a man who claimed his hair loss was precipitated by fallout from Chernobyl.

As yet Stone has not blamed Druridge Bay power station, just up the coast from his Gateshead birthplace, for his premature follicle damage, but nonetheless, after Wednesday his future in an England shirt looks assured. And if Terry Venables takes the hint, matches him in midfield with Draper of Aston Villa and persuades Gazzetta to stick his head in a basin full of Immac, the European Championship is as good as England's.

Chris holding CD case up.
...ACTUALLY, CAN YOU GET ME THIS ON VINYL. HAVE WE GOT THIS ON VINYL? Yeah there's one in the box Jamie fetches Vanessa Paradis 7-inch ...but I don't think the turntable is working, Chris. DON'T WORRY. RECORD PLEASE... puts record on turntable and needle on record But the turntable's bust...I DON'T WANT TO PLAY IT, I'M JUST GOING TO SMASH IT FOR THE FRENCH PROTEST.

The Breakfast Show
DJ: Chris Evans
Time: 6.30 - 9am
Monday - Friday
Frequency 97 - 99FM



99FM RADI ONE

Win a Ski holiday to Keystone, Colorado with the INDEPENDENT

Plus K2 skis and snowboards to be won

If you fancy danger and excitement then let us introduce you to the ultimate adrenaline kick - extreme skiing. To celebrate the release of Warren Miller's new ski film - *Endless Winter* (presented by Labatt's Blue) which offers spectacular ski and snowboard footage, we've teamed up with Black Diamond Films to bring you your own taste of extreme skiing.

We are offering readers of the *Independent* the chance to start the ski season in style with our Extreme Ski prize draw. Our exclusive first prize is a seven-day holiday for two in the majestic mountains of Colorado, USA. You'll be staying in the top ski resort of Keystone which offers world-class accommodation plus the superb experience of night skiing. Not only that, but with your interchangeable lift ticket you'll be able to take to the slopes of Keystone, Breckenridge and Arapahoe Basin.

Ski for choice, you'll be able to ski and snowboard through champagne powder snow glistening beneath deep blue Colorado skies.

For our next six winners, we have a fabulous range of K2 skis and snowboards to choose from. The four ski models available are the FX 11.2 from the Adrenalin series; MSL 1.0 from the Attack series; 5500 CS from the Unlim-

ited series and the 5500 NS from the ladies Unlimited series. If you'd like to try your hand at snowboarding, then you could be surfing on K2's Dart Freestyle snowboard or the Eldorado 164 Extreme and Freeride snowboard.

Twenty-four readers will receive a pair of Vail Regulator Goggles from Smith, the number one brand in the UK. These goggles feature an advanced anti-fog system, perfect for the serious skier. Fifty readers will receive a Tintin Fur neck warmer, great for mount top and bus stops!

Also available are three hundred copies of Warren Miller's video *Born to Ski*. Designed to take your breath away, it features extreme skiing at its best. Another seven winners will each receive a case of Labatt's Blue Beer.

How to enter:

To enter our prize draw you must collect five differently numbered tokens from the seven we are publishing this week in the *Independent* on Sunday and the *Independent*. One token must come from the *Independent* on Sunday. Today we print Token 6, we will print an entry form on Saturday.

Rules are as previously published

The first five readers to call the telephone number today (10am - 7pm), 0121 240 4071 quoting *Independent Extreme Ski Cinema Tour Offer*, will each receive a free pair of tickets for the 8.30pm performance of *Endless Winter* on Saturday 18 November at the Prince Charles Cinema, Leicester Square, London. For further information on your nearest venue call the ticket hotline number above. Tickets are available for £4.99 in advance or £5.99 on the door.

For information on new low airfare packages (from £325) to Keystone and Breckenridge in Colorado, call 0800 891772.

Another force rises on Tyneside

Non-League notebook

RUPERT METCALF

The Premiership leaders, Newcastle United, are not the only footballing success story on Tyneside this season. On the south side of the river, Gateshead are enjoying their best campaign for years, and could claim second place in the GM Vauxhall Conference if they beat Hartlepool at the International Stadium tomorrow.

The successors to the club of the same name who lost their place in the Football League in 1960, Gateshead have a realistic chance of promotion to the Third Division. The facilities at their home ground, which is more famous for hosting high-profile athletics events, ensure they would not suffer the same fate as Kidderminster and Macclesfield, both denied access to the Endsleigh League because of problems with their grounds.

The man behind their rise is Colin Richardson, who took charge at Gateshead two years ago. He won 25 trophies at his five previous clubs - Ferryhill, Whickham, Newcastle Blue Star, North Shields and Bridlington Town - and he will hungry for more.

Richardson firmly believes his side can win the Conference this season. "That's what we're all in it for," he said last night, as he looked forward to extending his team's run of six wins in their last seven matches. "We're scoring goals now and not giving them away. We've changed a few things for the better."

Unlike some of their rivals in the Conference, who have paid out sizeable fees to strengthen their squads, Gateshead have signed their five recruits this term on free transfers: strikers Dean Trott from Northampton, Paul Thompson from Hamblepool and Sam Kitchen from Doncaster, plus midfielder Derek Ord from Gretna and goalkeeper Sean Musgrave from Sunderland. Richardson is so confident in his squad's ability that he has allowed the club's top scorer for the past two seasons, Paul Dobson, to move on to Bishop Auckland for a four-figure fee.

In search of beautiful

Final qualifying table

Charlton's

Early buyers

Labatt's Blue



K2

Smith

In search of the beautiful game

In a recent edition of the BBC's documentary series on European football, *Football, Fussball, Voetbal*, Hugh McIlvanney recalled a fellow Scottish journalist's comment after Real Madrid had beaten Eintracht Frankfurt 7-3 at Hampden Park in 1960. "It's all very well, but would our punters stand for that every week?" McIlvanney was asked. "They have just stood around for an hour, stunned with admiration," McIlvanney replied. "Would they stand for it? They would like the chance."

Modern defensive techniques and attitudes mean the 1996 European Championship is unlikely to bring us anything to equal that match, but it could give the British game the confidence to re-assess its approach. Tony Adams said this week that the public need to be educated to expect a more patient game. As the wide interest in the BBC series and Channel 4's coverage of English football has illustrated, they may be ready to learn.

Thoughts are increasingly turning to Euro 96 following the conclusion on Wednesday of the qualifying competition (although

is the time right for British football to alter its approach? asks Glenn Moore)

The last of the 16 places will be decided until next month's play-off between the Republic of Ireland and the Netherlands.

The last time England staged a major tournament, in 1966, Pele was kicked out of the tournament, several matches were disfigured by malicious and violent play, and the winners were a side who owed as much to Nobby Stiles as Bobby Charlton. The consequence was two decades of stagnation within the English game. This time there is hope of better things.

Since the last World Cup there has been a move towards brighter football, led by the likes of Ajax and encouraged by stricter referees. More than half of next summer's teams have caught this mood - Croatia, France, Romania and Portugal are all entering sides while Russia, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy and England have similar potential.

Final qualifying tables

Group One										Group Five									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts				
Russia	10	6	3	1	15	9	21	Czech Rep.	10	6	3	1	15	9	21				
France	10	5	5	0	22	2	20	Netherlands	10	6	3	1	15	9	21				
Sweden	10	4	2	4	14	12	14	Norway	10	6	2	2	17	8	15				
Poland	10	3	4	3	14	12	12	Bulgaria	10	3	2	5	8	13	12				
Ireland	10	3	1	6	13	13	12	Malta	10	3	2	6	9	13	12				
Azerbaijan	10	0	1	9	2	29	1												

Group Two										Group Six									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts				
Spain	10	8	2	0	25	4	26	Portugal	10	7	2	1	29	7	23				
Denmark	10	6	3	1	19	9	21	North Macedonia	10	6	2	2	19	12	17				
Belgium	10	5	3	2	16	9	17	Austria	10	5	3	2	16	9	17				
Macedonia	10	4	3	3	12	7	12	Latvia	10	4	3	3	16	14	12				
Cyrus	10	3	4	6	20	7	12	Albania	10	4	3	6	11	12	12				
America	10	1	7	5	17	5	17	Liechtenstein	10	0	1	9	1	40	0				

Group Three										Group Seven									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts				
Switzerland	10	5	3	2	15	7	17	Russia	10	8	2	0	34	6	26				
Turkey	10	4	3	3	16	9	17	Scotland	10	7	2	1	29	7	23				
Sweden	10	3	4	3	12	9	17	Greece	10	5	3	2	16	9	17				
Hungary	10	2	2	6	13	12	12	Latvia	10	3	2	5	11	27	9				
Iceland	10	1	5	3	12	5	17	Albania	10	2	2	6	9	19	12				

Group Four										Group Eight									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts				
Croatia	10	7	2	1	22	5	23	Russia	10	8	2	0	34	6	26				
Italy	10	7	2	1	20	5	22	Scotland	10	7	2	1	29	7	23				
Lithuania	10	5	3	2	13	12	12	Greece	10	5	3	2	16	9	17				
Ukraine	10	3	4	3	13	12	12	Latvia	10	3	2	5	11	27	9				
Slovenia	10	3	2	5	13	12	12	Albania	10	2	2	6	9	19	12				
Estonia	10	0	1	9	31	0	0	San Marino	10	0	10	0	2	26	0				

Charlton's 'home' help

Jack Charlton probably would not mind taking his Republic of Ireland team to Wembley in the European Championship, but not just yet. The Republic of Ireland manager is not about to surrender "home" advantage by agreeing to move his side's play-off match against the Netherlands away from a 41,000-capacity Anfield, even if playing there means thousands of Irish supporters having to stay at home.

"At Anfield it will be a home game for our Liverpool players Jason McAteer, Phil Babb and Mark Kennedy - if I pick them off course," Charlton said yesterday. "The crowd there is close to the pitch and the atmosphere will be a great help to us."

Louis Kilkenny, the Football Association of Ireland president, suggested an application for a switch to Wembley so that

the FA's chief executive, Sean Connolly, said: "Maybe Uefa would have brought pressure to bear but we are not now going to ask for a switch, Jack

Charlton will test the co-operation of leading club managers by invoking the five-day international rule which gives him first call on players. Unlike last weekend before the Portuguese defeat, there is a full Premiership programme on 9 and

Roy Keane will struggle to be fit after hernia surgery, but Ireland's captain, Andy Townsend, should be over his foot problem, having missed Wednesday's defeat, the worst in Charlton's 92-match reign.

Christian Karembeu

will be available again. The FA will be able to get another chance of qualifying and I don't want to see it squandered by players being pulled out again through injuries. We have had a horrendous time the last six months having to field weakened teams. I accept that as international manager I only borrow players from their clubs, but I've got to get every advantage I can this time," Charlton said.

Roy Keane will struggle to be fit after hernia surgery, but Ireland's captain, Andy Townsend, should be over his foot problem, having missed Wednesday's defeat, the worst in Charlton's 92-match reign.

Christian Karembeu

Early buyers boost sales

LIZ SEARL

Although Euro 96 is still seven months away and the draw has yet to be made, more than 65 per cent of available tickets have already been sold.

England are the only team who know where they will be playing (at Wembley) in the group matches. If they proceed, England would play at Wembley or Anfield in the quarter-finals and Wembley or Old Trafford in the semi-finals. Wembley has now sold 86 per cent of its current allocation for all matches.

TICKETS FOR THE FINALS

Ticket prices for the tournament range from £15 to £135. It is only possible to buy tickets for the knockout stages if tickets have already been bought for group games. This means that in order to purchase one ticket for the final, a minimum of £270 must be spent on a total of at least 11 tickets covering matches at all stages of the tournament.

A second tranche of tickets will be allocated after the draw on 17 December. Each com-

peting visiting team has been allocated a total of 7,000 tickets per match, with a larger allocation being made for the final.

Tickets may only be obtained by postal application. Forms are available from any branch of Midland Bank.

TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Group matches: Group A: Wembley (15, 18 and 21 June); Group B: Elland Road (12, 15 and 18 June); Group C: Old Trafford (12, 15 and 19 June); and Anfield (19, 22 and 25 June). Quarter-finals (22 June (Anfield and Wembley), 23 June (Elland Road and Wembley), 26 June (Old Trafford and Wembley)). Final: 30 June (Old Trafford and Wembley).

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RUGBY UNION

Carling plans third World Cup 28



FOOTBALL

Eyes on the summer's prize

FIRST TEST: Atherton gives valuable solidity as England offer hope for the series after recovering from another depressing start

Hick's sense of history averts crisis

Cricket

MARTIN JOHNSON
reports from Pretoria
England 221-4
v South Africa

When it came to making history yesterday, the fact that the last TV pictures of an England-South Africa Test match were broadcast in black and white was a reasonably strong contender, but compared to England failing to make a total porridge of the first day of a Test series, it was not really in the same frame.

Twenty-four hours into most recent series, England have effectively been history themselves, but after initially threatening to disappear down the same depressing plughole, Graeme Hick and Michael Atherton provided hope that England's batsmen versus South Africa's fast bowlers will not be the one-sided contest many people feared.

Atherton, whose long-standing back trouble may be partially due to the amount of times he has carried his team on it, made a typically stoical 78 before splicing the second new ball to gully, while Hick, whose expression range normally runs from blank to deadpan, was so delighted by a wonderfully positive fourth Test match century, that he only just stopped short of a series of handstands.

These two rallied England from a precarious 64 for 3, and if Atherton - who had grown visibly more weary after lunch - had managed to hang on until the close, it would have been an even more satisfying day. As for South Africa the only real bonus was a highly impressive debut from another fast bowler, Pollock, Shau.

As England, having preferred

Richard Illingworth to Devon

Malcolm, would have batted first by choice had they not been invited to their first Test match toss against South Africa for 30 years was something of an irrelevance. They will also have been relieved that the pitch was a long way from the trampoline that was forecast, even though Atherton - hit twice on the helmet and once on the shoulder - ended the day with a bruise and a headache.

The history of the occasion was slightly lost on the South African public, who turned up for the first Test between these two countries in 30 years in something closer to driblets than droves. On top of which, if there was one black face in the crowd of 9,300, it was hard to spot among all the white and red ones.

Why should have been is hard to say, although the fact that this match is being played in the mainly white region of what used to be called Verwoerburg might have had something to do with it. A place with that kind of name would hardly have had blacks queuing up outside the estate agents' windows.

More likely, though, is the fact that the Test match culture was all but lost to the instant variety during the years of isolation, and a one-day froth society will need a bit of weaning back on to solids. Whether yesterday will have helped is a moot point, in that South Africa's attack is one-dimensional to the point of utter tedium.

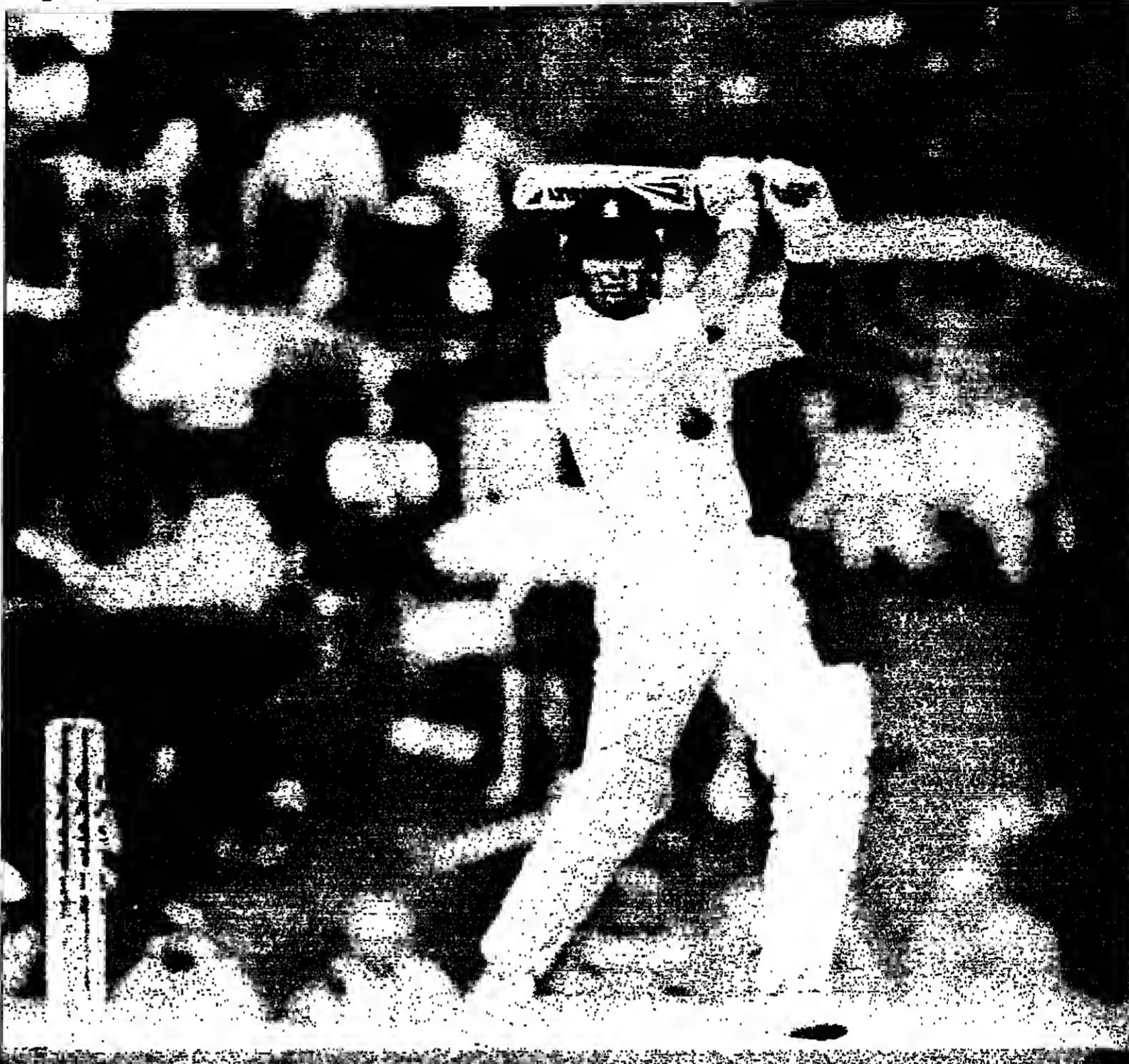
However, their fielding is probably even more brilliant than Australia's, and the diving catch at backward square-leg to dismiss Alec Stewart off a full-blooded pull was close to unbelievable. What was even more remarkable was the fact that the fielder, Craig Matthews, spilled a relatively simple return catch offered by Hick on 67.

At the best example, though, is a TV advert in which a bare-bottomed Wil Carling lookalike clammers into the Princess of Wales' bedroom, only to find he has been beaten to it by the entire South African rugby team.

Neither was there much subtlety about the way South Africa bowled to Atherton and Hick in particular, but while Atherton battled away in largely heroic fashion for five and a half hours, Hick was unrecognisable as the timid character he often looks when cricket balls are fizzing past his visor.

Allan Donald and Pollock were always a handful, but Hick was imperviously dismissive of the distinctly undangerous back-up team of Brett Schultz, Matthews and Brian McMillan. Hick's first delivery, no-ball from Pollock which he pavishly spliced out on the leg side, gave no hint of the spanking he was about to deliver.

Hick's ability has never been in question, merely his character. This was the first time he has done it for England in a crisis and, to give the man his due, it was not far short of brilliant.



Staying power: Graeme Hick drives through the covers during his century at Centurion Park yesterday

Photograph: Graham Chadwick/Allsport

'I had a lot to prove to people and myself'

Graeme Hick's fourth Test hundred yesterday provided some welcome evidence that he is coming to terms with pace bowling at Test match level.

Last summer's three-figure contribution against the West Indies on a low, slow Trent Bridge pitch still left a question mark over Hick's technique when facing quick bowling. But here, there was enough bounce to keep South Africa's five fast men - led by Allan Donald - interested. They

tried plenty of bouncers but Hick responded with 21 boundaries in his priceless, unbeaten 105.

"Playing fast, bowling has been something I've worried about in the past," Hick admitted. "But it's not anything that really bothers me."

If that sounds contradictory, the Worcestershire batsman was altogether easier to follow during his four-hour innings.

Since being dropped at Old Trafford last summer, Hick has

responded with Test scores of 118 not out, 7, 96, 51 not out and now an unbeaten 105. At last, the player who has dominated county cricket is showing his worth at Test level.

"I was very disappointed to be left out during the summer and had a lot to prove to people and myself after that," he said.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the day and think it was quite an important hundred."

However, Hick's contribution was not the only highlight

as England recovered from 64 for 3 after being put in, Mike Atherton's innings of 78 proving equally as crucial.

"He played very well," said Hick, after his stand of 142 with Atherton. "We've had a good day - it would have been a Sunday if Mike was still at the crease."

"We took a gamble," admitted Bob Woolmer, their English coach.

"We hoped the pitch would be more conducive to seam and swing but the ball did not go sideways all day."

Hick and Atherton played superbly and really got stuck in after lunch.

"That's what Test cricket is all about. But our bowlers kept it and a couple of quick wickets in the morning will make it look a different game."

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Blues await decision on assault charges

Football

PHIL SHAW

Officials of an Italian Serie B club, Ancona, met last night to decide whether to press assault charges against unspectacular Birmingham City players following violent clashes after an Anglo-Italian Cup tie on Wednesday.

The "Battle of Ancona" left the local club's coach, Massimo Cacciatori, nursing a fractured cheekbone and an eye wound. Cacciatori, who was taken to hospital but did not require surgery, alleged that his injuries were inflicted by Liam Daish, the Birmingham defender, during a fracas in the dressing-room area after an ill-tempered match.

Reports from Italy suggested that police may seek the extradition of as many as four members of the Birmingham party. Under Italian law, criminal proceedings are automatic if an individual is certified unfit to work by a doctor for 20 days or more. Conviction for assault can carry

a prison sentence of up to three years, but if Cacciatori is given less than 20 days to recover, he can sue his alleged assailant(s) only through the civil courts.

A spokesman for Ancona maintained that Cacciatori had been "punched and butted" during an "outrageous" attack. He added: "What's happened is happening. We've referred the case to the Italian League, and we will make up our minds fairly over the next few days."

Meanwhile, the Football League confirmed that it is likely to set up a commission of inquiry into events during and after Birmingham's 2-1 win.

The League expects to receive a report today from the referee, John Lloyd of Wrexham, who also needed hospital treatment on two fingers injured as he sought to break up fighting in the tunnel after the match.

The only British newspaper journalist present, Colin Tatum of Birmingham's *Evening Mail*, reported yesterday that he saw Cacciatori run on to the pitch to strike one Birmingham player,

Ricky Otto, round the throat. He also witnessed the substitute, Jae Martin, being poked in the eye by an Ancona player.

No arrests were made, and Daish denied striking Cacciatori.

"If that's what they want to say, let them. Nothing happened," Daish said. Television pictures showed the coach being wheeled away on a stretcher, evidently with face wounds.

Barry Fry, the Birmingham manager, initially blamed his opposite number "a disgrace" for his alleged incursions on to the pitch, but by the time Birmingham's plane landed in Britain, the normally effusive Fry was tight-lipped. The club secretary, Alan Jones, issued a terse "no comment" yesterday.

The Anglo-Italian Cup has suffered from poor crowds and disciplinary problems since being resurrected in 1992. Only 800 spectators, including 92 Birmingham fans, were at Wednesday's match. Ironically, the clubs could well meet again in the final at Wembley next spring.

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